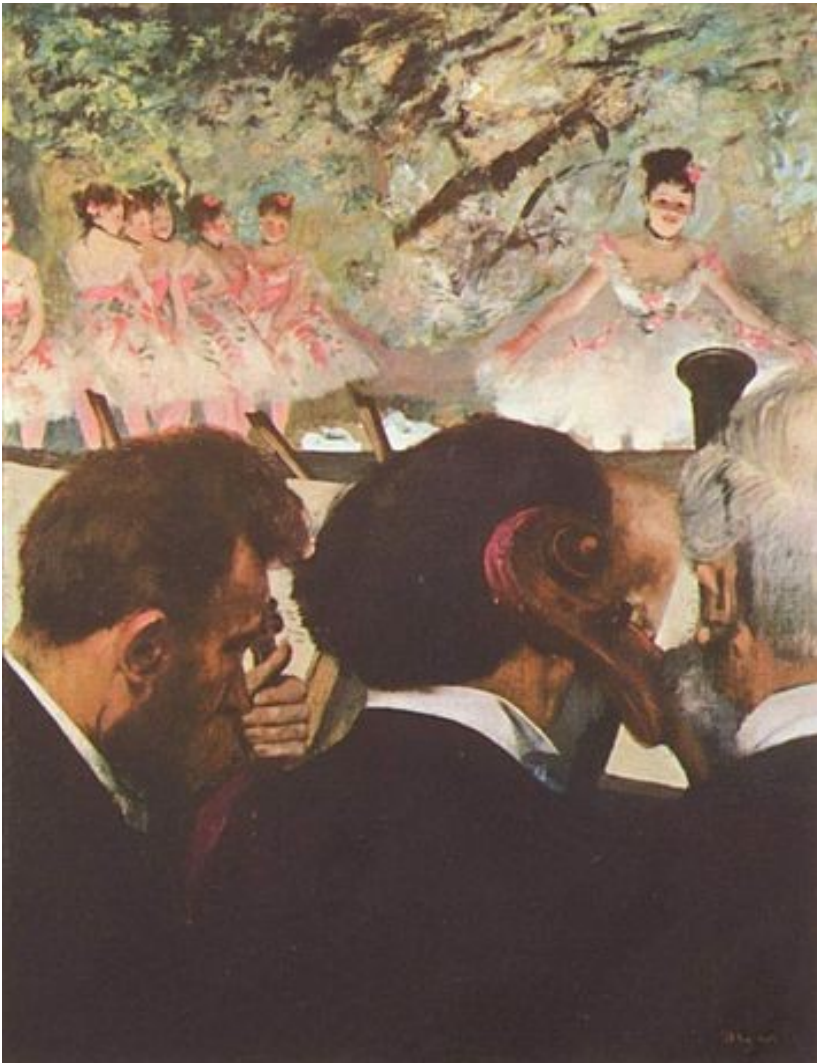


PD ARTS

AUGUST 2016



Edgar Degas

Anthology by Matt Pierard

IN THE VORTEX

Eliot

Joyce

Lewis

An historical essayist

The new poetry

Breviora

from Project Gutenberg's **Instigations**, by Ezra Pound and Ernest Fenollosa

T.S. ELIOT

*Il n'y a de livres que ceux où un écrivain s'est raconté
lui-même en racontant les mœurs de ses contemporains--leurs
rêves, leurs vanités, leurs amours, et leurs folies_--
Remy de Gourmont.*

De Gourmont uses this sentence in writing of the incontestable superiority of "Madame Bovary," "L'Éducation Sentimentale" and "Bouvard et Pécuchet" to "Salammbô" and "La Tentation de St. Antoine." A casual thought convinces one that it is true for all prose. Is it true also for poetry? One may give latitude to the interpretation of *rêves*; the gross public would have the poet write little else, but De Gourmont keeps a proportion. The vision should have its place in due setting if we are to believe its reality.

The few poems which Mr. Eliot has given us maintain this proportion, as they maintain other proportions of art. After much contemporary work that is merely factitious, much that is good in intention but impotently unfinished and incomplete; much whose flaws are due to sheer ignorance which a year's study or thought might have remedied, it is a comfort to come upon complete art, naïve despite its intellectual subtlety, lacking all pretense.

It is quite safe to compare Mr. Eliot's work with anything written in French, English or American since the death of Jules Laforgue. The reader will find nothing better, and he will be extremely fortunate if he finds much half as good.

The necessity, or at least the advisability of comparing English or American work with French work is not readily granted by the usual English or American writer. If you suggest it, the Englishman answers that he has not thought about it--he does not see why he should bother

himself about what goes on south of the channel; the American replies by stating that you are "no longer American." This is the bitterest jibe in his vocabulary. The net result is that it is extremely difficult to read one's contemporaries. After a time one tires of "promise."

I should like the reader to note how complete is Mr. Eliot's depiction of our contemporary condition. He has not confined himself to genre nor to society portraiture. His

lonely men in shirt-sleeves leaning out of windows

are as real as his ladies who

come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

His "one night cheap hotels" are as much "there" as are his

four wax candles in the darkened room,
Four rings of light upon the ceiling overhead,
An atmosphere of Juliet's tomb.

And, above all, there is no rhetoric, although there is Elizabethan reading in the background. Were I a French critic, skilled in their elaborate art of writing books about books, I should probably go to some length discussing Mr. Eliot's two sorts of metaphor: his wholly unrealizable, always apt, half ironic suggestion, and his precise realizable picture. It would be possible to point out his method of conveying a whole situation and half a character by three words of a quoted phrase; his constant aliveness, his mingling of very subtle observation with the unexpectedness of a backhanded cliché. It is, however, extremely dangerous to point out such devices. The method is Mr. Eliot's own, but as soon as one has reduced even a fragment of it to formula, some one else, not Mr. Eliot, some one else wholly lacking in his aptitudes, will at once try to make poetry by mimicking his external procedure. And this indefinite "some one" will, needless to say, make a botch of it.

For what the statement is worth, Mr. Eliot's work interests me more than that of any other poet now writing in English.[2] The most interesting poems in Victorian English are Browning's "Men and Women," or, if that statement is too absolute, let me contend that the form of these poems is the most vital form of that period of English, and that the poems written in that form are the least like each other in content. Antiquity gave us Ovid's "Heroides" and Theocritus' woman using magic. The form of Browning's "Men and Women" is more alive than the epistolary form of the "Heroides." Browning included a certain amount of ratiocination and of purely intellectual comment, and in just that proportion he lost intensity. Since Browning there have been very few good poems of this

sort. Mr. Eliot has made two notable additions to the list. And he has placed his people in contemporary settings, which is much more difficult than to render them with mediæval romantic trappings. If it is permitted to make comparison with a different art, let me say that he has used contemporary detail very much as Velasquez used contemporary detail in "Las Meninas"; the cold gray-green tones of the Spanish painter have, it seems to me, an emotional value not unlike the emotional value of Mr. Eliot's rhythms, and of his vocabulary.

James Joyce has written the best novel of my decade, and perhaps the best criticism of it has come from a Belgian who said, "All this is as true of my country as of Ireland." Eliot has a like ubiquity of application. Art does not avoid universals, it strikes at them all the harder in that it strikes through particulars. Eliot's work rests apart from that of the many new writers who have used the present freedoms to no advantage, who have gained no new precisions of language, and no variety in their cadence. His men in shirt-sleeves, and his society ladies, are not a local manifestation; they are the stuff of our; modern world, and true of more countries than one. I would praise the work for its fine tone, its humanity, and its realism; for all good art is realism of one sort or another.

It is complained that Eliot is lacking in emotion. "La Figlia che Piange" is an adequate confutation.

If the reader wishes mastery of "regular form," the "Conversation Galante" is sufficient to show that symmetrical form is within Mr. Eliot's grasp. You will hardly find such neatness save in France; such modern neatness, save in Laforgue.

De Gourmont's phrase to the contrary notwithstanding, the supreme test of a book is that we should feel some unusual intelligence working behind the words. By this test various other new books, that I have, or might have, beside me, go to pieces. The barrels of sham poetry that every decade and school and fashion produce, go to pieces. It is sometimes extremely difficult to find any other particular reason for their being so unsatisfactory. I have expressly written here not "intellect" but "intelligence." There is no intelligence without emotion. The emotion may be anterior or concurrent. There may be emotion without much intelligence, but that does not concern us.

Versification:

A conviction as to the rightness or wrongness of vers libre is no guarantee of a poet. I doubt if there is much use trying to classify the various kinds of vers libre, but there is an anarchy which may be vastly overdone; and there is a monotony of bad usage as tiresome as any typical eighteenth or nineteenth century flatness.

In a recent article Mr. Eliot contended, or seemed to contend, that good _vers libre_ was little more than a skilful evasion of the better known English metres. His article was defective in that he omitted all consideration of metres depending on quantity, alliteration, etc.; in fact, he wrote as if metres were measured by accent. This may have been tactful on his part, it may have brought his article nearer to the comprehension of his readers (that is, those of the "New Statesman," people chiefly concerned with sociology of the "button" and "unit" variety). But he came nearer the fact when he wrote elsewhere: "No _vers_ is _libre_ for the man who wants to do a good job."

Alexandrine and other grammarians have made cubbyholes for various groupings of syllables; they have put names upon them, and have given various labels to "metres" consisting of combinations of these different groups. Thus it would be hard to escape contact with some group or other; only an encyclopedist could ever be half sure he had done so. The known categories would allow a fair liberty to the most conscientious traditionalist. The most fanatical vers-librist will escape them with difficulty. However, I do not think there is any crying need for verse with absolutely no rhythmical basis.

On the other hand, I do not believe that Chopin wrote to a metronome. There is undoubtedly a sense of music that takes count of the "shape" of the rhythm in a melody rather than of bar divisions, which came rather late in the history of written music and were certainly not the first or most important thing that musicians attempted to record. The creation of such shapes is part of thematic invention. Some musicians have the faculty of invention, rhythmic, melodic. Likewise some poets.

Treatises full of musical notes and of long and short marks have never been convincingly useful. Find a man with thematic invention and all he can say is that he gets what the Celts call a "chune" in his head, and that the words "go into it," or when they don't "go into it" they "stick out and worry him."

You can not force a person to play a musical masterpiece correctly, even by having the notes "correctly" printed on the paper before him; neither can you force a person to feel the movement of poetry, be the metre "regular" or "irregular." I have heard Mr. Yeats trying to read Burns, struggling in vain to fit the "Birks o' Aberfeldy" and "Bonnie Alexander" into the mournful keen of the "Wind among the Reeds." Even in regular metres there are incompatible systems of music.

I have heard the best orchestral conductor in England read poems in free verse, poems in which the rhythm was so faint as to be almost imperceptible. He read them with the author's cadence, with flawless correctness. A distinguished statesman read from the same book, with the intonations of a legal document, paying no attention to the movement inherent in the words before him. I have heard a celebrated Dante

scholar and mediæval enthusiast read the sonnets of the "Vita Nuova" as if they were not only prose, but the ignominious prose of a man devoid of emotions: an utter castration.

The leader of orchestra said to me, "There is more for a musician in a few lines with something rough or uneven, such as Byron's

There be none of Beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;

than in whole pages of regular poetry."

Unless a man can put some thematic invention into *_vers libre_*, he would perhaps do well to stick to "regular" metres, which have certain chances of being musical from their form, and certain other chances of being musical through his failure in fitting the form. In *_vers libre_* his musical chances are but in sensitivity and invention.

Mr. Eliot is one of the very few who have given a personal rhythm, an identifiable quality of sound as well as of style. And at any rate, his book is the best thing in poetry since ... (for the sake of peace I will leave that date to the imagination). I have read most of the poems many times; I last read the whole book at breakfast time and from flimsy proof-sheets: I believe these are "test conditions." And, "confound it, the fellow can write."

JOYCE[3]

Despite the War, despite the paper shortage, and despite those old-established publishers whose god is their belly and whose god-father was the late F.T. Palgrave, there is a new edition of James Joyce's "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man." [4] It is extremely gratifying that this book should have "reached its fourth thousand," and the fact is significant in just so far as it marks the beginning of a new phase of English publishing, a phase comparable to that started in France some years ago by the *_Mercure_*.

The old houses, even those, or even *_more_* those, which once had a literary tradition, or at least literary pretensions, having ceased to care a damn about literature, the lovers of good writing have "struck"; have sufficiently banded themselves together to get a few good books into print, and even into circulation. The actual output is small in bulk, a few brochures of translations, Eliot's "Prufrock," Joyce's "A Portrait," and Wyndham Lewis' "Tarr," but I have it on good authority that at least one other periodical will start publishing its authors after the War, so there are new rods in pickle for the old fat-stomached

contingent and for the cardboard generation.

Joyce's "A Portrait" is literature; it has become almost the prose bible of a few people, and I think I have encountered at least three hundred admirers of the book, certainly that number of people who, whether they "like" it or not, are wholly convinced of its merits.

Mr. Wells I have encountered in print, where he says that Joyce has a cloacal obsession, but he also says that Mr. Joyce writes literature and that his book is to be ranked with the works of Sterne and of Swift.

Wells is no man to babble of obsessions, but let it stand to his honor that he came out with a fine burst of admiration for a younger and half-known writer.

From England and America there has come a finer volume of praise for this novel than for any that I can remember. There has also come impotent spitting and objurgation from the back-woods and from Mr. Dent's office boy, and, as offset, interesting comment in modern Greek, French and Italian.

Joyce's poems have been reprinted by Elkin Mathews, his short stories re-issued, and a second novel started in "The Little Review."

For all the book's being so familiar, it is pleasant to take up "A Portrait" in its new exiguous form, and one enters many speculations, perhaps more than when one read it initially. It is not that one can open to a forgotten page so much as that wherever one opens there is always a place to start; some sentence like--

"Stephen looked down coldly on the oblong skull beneath him overgrown with tangled twine-colored hair";

or

"Frowsy girls sat along the curbstones before their baskets"; or

"He drained his third cup of watery tea to the dregs and set to chewing the crusts of fried bread that were scattered near him, staring into the dark pool of the jar. The yellow dripping had been scooped out like a boghole, and the pool under it brought back to his memory the dark turf-colored water of the bath in Clongowes. The box of pawntickets at his elbow had just been rifled, and he took up idly one after another in his greasy fingers the blue and white docketts, scrawled and sanded and creased and bearing the name of the pledger as Daly or MacEvoy.

"1 Pair Buskins, &c."

I do not mean to imply that a novel is necessarily a bad novel because one can pick it up without being in this manner caught and dragged into reading; but I do indicate the curiously seductive interest of the clear-cut and definite sentences.

Neither, emphatically, is it to be supposed that Joyce's writing is merely a depiction of the sordid. The sordid is there in all conscience as you would find it in De Goncourt, but Joyce's power is in his scope. The reach of his writing is from the fried breadcrusts and from the fig-seeds in Cranley's teeth to the casual discussion of Aquinas:

"He wrote a hymn for Maundy Thursday. It begins with the words *_Pange lingua gloriosi_*. They say it is the highest glory of the hymnal. It is an intricate and soothing hymn. I like it; but there is no hymn that can be put beside that mournful and majestic processional song, the *Vexilla Regis* of Venantius Fortunatus.

"Lynch began to sing softly and solemnly in a deep bass voice:

*'Impleta sunt quae concinit
David fideli carmine....'*

"They turned into Lower Mount Street. A few steps from the corner a fat young man, wearing a silk neck-cloth, &c."

On almost every page of Joyce you will find just such swift alternation of subjective beauty and external shabbiness, squalor, and sordidness. It is the bass and treble of his method. And he has his scope beyond that of the novelists his contemporaries, in just so far as whole stretches of his keyboard are utterly out of their compass.

The conclusion or moral termination from all of which is that the great writers of any period must be the remarkable minds of that period; they must know the extremes of their time; they must not represent a *_social status_*; they cannot be the "Grocer" or the "Dilettante" with the egregious and capital letter, nor yet the professor or the professing wearer of Jaeger or professional eater of herbs.

In the three hundred pages of "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" there is no omission; there is nothing in life so beautiful that Joyce cannot touch it without profanation--without, above all, the profanations of sentiment and sentimentality--and there is nothing so sordid that he cannot treat it with his metallic exactitude.

I think there are few people who can read Shaw, Wells, Bennett, or even Conrad (who is in a category apart) without feeling that there are values and tonalities to which these authors are wholly insensitive. I do not imply that there cannot be excellent art within quite distinct limitations, but the artist cannot afford to be or to appear ignorant of

such limitations; he cannot afford a pretense of such ignorance. He must almost choose his limitations. If he paints a snuff-box or a stage scene he must not be ignorant of the fact, he must not think he is painting a landscape, three feet by two feet, in oils.

I think that what tires me more than anything else in the writers now past middle age is that they always seem to imply that they are giving us all modern life, the whole social panorama, all the instruments of the orchestra. Joyce is of another donation.

His earlier book, "Dubliners," contained several well-constructed stories, several sketches rather lacking in form. It was a definite promise of what was to come. There is very little to be said in praise of it which would not apply with greater force to "A Portrait." I find that whoever reads one book inevitably sets out in search of the other.

The quality and distinction of the poems in the first half of Mr. Joyce's "Chamber Music" (new edition, published by Elkin Mathews, 4A, Cork Street, W.1, at 1_s_. 3_d_.) is due in part to their author's strict musical training. We have here the lyric in some of its best traditions, and one pardons certain trifling inversions, much against the taste of the moment, for the sake of the cleancut ivory finish, and for the interest of the rhythms, the cross run of the beat and the word, as of a stiff wind cutting the ripple-tops of bright water.

The wording is Elizabethan, the metres at times suggesting Herrick, but in no case have I been able to find a poem which is not in some way Joyce's own, even though he would seem, and that most markedly, to shun apparent originality, as in:

Who goes amid the green wood
With springtide all adorning her?
Who goes amid the merry green wood
To make it merrier?

Who passes in the sunlight
By ways that know the light footfall?
Who passes in the sweet sunlight
With mien so virginal?

The ways of all the woodland
Gleam with a soft and golden fire--
For whom does all the sunny woodland
Carry so brave attire?

O, it is for my true love
The woods their rich apparel wear--
O, it is for my true love,
That is so young and fair.

Here, as in nearly every poem, the motif is so slight that the poem scarcely exists until one thinks of it as set to music; and the workmanship is so delicate that out of twenty readers scarce one will notice its fineness. If Henry Lawes were alive again he might make the suitable music, for the cadence is here worthy of his cunning:

O, it is for my true love,
That is so young and fair.

The musician's work is very nearly done for him, and yet how few song-setters could be trusted to finish it and to fill in an accompaniment.

The tone of the book deepens with the poem beginning:

O sweetheart, hear you
Your lover's tale;
A man shall have sorrow
When friends him fail.

For he shall know then
Friends be untrue;
And a little ashes
Their words come to.

The collection comes to its end and climax in two profoundly emotional poems; quite different in tonality and in rhythm-quality, from the lyrics in the first part of the book:--

All day I hear the noise of waters
Making moan,
Sad as the sea-bird is, when going
Forth alone,
He hears the wind cry to the waters'
Monotone.

The gray winds, the cold winds are blowing
Where I go.
I hear the noise of many waters
Far below.
All day, all night, I hear them flowing
To and fro.

The third and fifth lines should not be read with an end stop. I think the rush of the words will escape the notice of scarcely any one. The phantom hearing in this poem is coupled, in the next poem, to phantom vision, and to a robustezza of expression:

I hear an army charging upon the land,
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their knees;
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battle-name;
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling laughter;
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long green hair;
They come out of the sea and run shouting by the shore:
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
My love, my love, my love, why have you left me alone?

In both these poems we have a strength and a fibrousness of sound which almost prohibits the thought of their being "set to music," or to any music but that which is in them when spoken; but we notice a similarity of the technique to that of the earlier poems, in so far as the beauty of movement is produced by a very skilful, or perhaps we should say a deeply intuitive, interruption of metric mechanical regularity. It is the irregularity which has shown always in the best periods.

The book is an excellent antidote for those who find Mr. Joyce's prose "disagreeable" and who at once fly to conclusions about Mr. Joyce's "cloacal obsessions." I have yet to find in Joyce's published works a violent or malodorous phrase which does not justify itself not only by its verity, but by its heightening of some opposite effect, by the poignancy which it imparts to some emotion or to some thwarted desire for beauty. Disgust with the sordid is but another expression of a sensitiveness to the finer thing. There is no perception of beauty without a corresponding disgust. If the price for such artists as James Joyce is exceeding heavy, it is the artist himself who pays, and if Armageddon has taught us anything it should have taught us to abominate the half-truth, and the tellers of the half-truth in literature.

ULYSSES

Incomplete as I write this. His profoundest work, most significant--"Exiles" was a side-step, necessary katharsis, clearance of mind from continental contemporary thought--"Ulysses," obscure, even obscene, as life itself is obscene in places, but an impassioned meditation on life.

He has done what Flaubert set out to do in "Bouvard and Pécuchet," done it better, more succinct. An epitome.

"Bloom" answers the query that people made after "The Portrait." Joyce

has created his second character; he has moved from autobiography to the creation of the complimentary figure. Bloom on life, death, resurrection, immortality. Bloom and the Venus de Milo.

Bloom brings life into the book. All Bloom is vital. Talk of the other characters, cryptic, perhaps too particular, incomprehensible save to people who know Dublin, at least by hearsay, and who have university education plus mediævalism. But unavoidable or almost unavoidable, given the subject and the place of the subject.

NOTE: I am tired of rewriting the arguments for the realist novel; besides there is nothing to add. The Brothers de Goncourt said the thing once and for all, but despite the lapse of time their work is still insufficiently known to the American reader. The program in the preface to "Germinie Lacerteux" states the case and the whole case for realism; one can not improve the statement. I therefore give it entire, ad majoram Dei gloriam.

"PRÉFACE

De la première édition

Il nous faut demander pardon au public de lui donner ce livre, et l'avertir de ce qu'il y trouvera.

Le public aime les romans faux: ce roman est un roman vrai.

Il aime les livres qui font semblant d'aller dans le monde: ce livre vient de la rue.

Il aime les petites œuvres polissonnes, les mémoires de filles, les confessions d'alcôves, les saletés érotiques, le scandale qui se retrouse dans une image aux devantures des libraires, ce qu'il va lire est sévère et pur. Qu'il ne s'attende point à la photographie décolletée du plaisir: l'étude qui suit est la clinique de l'Amour.

Le public aime encore les lectures anodines et consolantes, les aventures qui finissent bien, les imaginations qui ne dérangent ni sa digestion ni sa sérénité: ce livre, avec sa triste et violente distraction, est fait pour contrarier ses habitudes et nuire à son hygiène.

Pourquoi donc l'avons-nous écrit? Est-ce simplement pour choquer le public et scandaliser ses goûts?

Non.

Vivant au dix-neuvième siècle, dans un temps de suffrage universel, de démocratie, de libéralisme, nous nous sommes demandé si ce qu'on appelle "les basses classes" n'avait pas droit au roman; si ce monde sous un monde, le peuple, devait rester sous le coup de l'interdit littéraire et des dédains d'auteurs qui ont fait jusqu'ici le silence sur l'âme et le cœur qu'il peut avoir. Nous nous sommes demandé s'il y avait encore, pour l'écrivain et pour le lecteur, en ces années d'égalité où nous sommes, des classes indignes, des malheurs trop bas, des drames trop mal embouchés, des catastrophes d'une terreur trop peu noble. Il nous est venu la curiosité de savoir si cette forme conventionnelle d'une littérature oubliée et d'une société disparue, la Tragédie, était définitivement morte; si, dans un pas sans caste et sans aristocratie légale, les misères des petits et des pauvres parleraient à l'intérêt, à l'émotion, à la pitié aussi haut que les misères des grands et des riches; si, en un mot, les larmes qu'on pleure en bas pourraient faire pleurer comme celles qu'on pleure en haut.

Ces pensées nous avaient fait oser l'humble roman de "Sœur Philomène," en 1861; elles nous font publier aujourd'hui "Germinie Lacerteux."

Maintenant, que ce livre soit calomnié: peu lui importe. Aujourd'hui que le Roman s'élargit et grandit, qu'il commence à être la grande forme sérieuse, passionnée, vivante, de l'étude littéraire et de l'enquête sociale, qu'il devient, par l'analyse et par la recherche psychologique, l'Histoire morale contemporaine, aujourd'hui que le Roman s'est imposé les études et les devoirs de la science, il peut en revendiquer les libertés et les franchises. Et qu'il cherche l'Art et la Vérité; qu'il montre des misères bonnes à ne pas laisser oublier aux heureux de Paris; qu'il fasse voir aux gens du monde ce que les dames de charité ont le courage de voir, ce que les reines d'autrefois faisaient toucher de l'œil à leurs enfants dans les hospices: la souffrance humaine, présente et toute vive, qui apprend la charité; que le Roman ait cette religion que le siècle passé appelait de ce large et vaste nom: Humanité; il lui suffit de cette conscience: son droit est là.

E. et J. de G."

WYNDHAM LEWIS

The signal omission from my critical papers is an adequate book on Wyndham Lewis; my excuses, apart from the limitations of time, must be that Mr. Lewis is alive and quite able to speak for himself, secondly, that one may print half-tone reproductions of sculpture, for however unsatisfactory they be, they pretend to be only half-tones, and could not show more than they do; but the reproduction of drawings and painting invites all sorts of expensive process impracticable during the years of war. When the public or the "publishers" are ready for a volume of Lewis, suitably illustrated, I am ready to write in the letterpress, though Mr. Lewis would do it better than I could.

He will rank among the great instigators and great inventors of design; there is mastery in his use of various media (my own interest in his work centres largely in the "drawing" completed with inks, water-color, chalk, etc.). His name is constantly bracketed with that of Gaudier, Picasso, Joyce, but these are fortuitous couplings. Lewis' painting is further from the public than were the carvings of Gaudier; Lewis is an older artist, maturer, fuller of greater variety and invention. His work is almost unknown to the public. His name is wholly familiar, BLAST is familiar, the "Timon" portfolio has been seen.

I had known him for seven years, known him as an artist, but I had no idea of his scope until he began making his preparations to go into the army; so careless had he been of any public or private approval. The "work" lay in piles on the floor of an attic; and from it we gathered most of the hundred or hundred and twenty drawings which now form the bases of the Quinn collection and of the Baker collection, (now in the South Kensington museum).

As very few people have seen all of these pictures very few people are in any position to contradict me. There are three of his works in this room and I can attest their wearing capacity; as I can attest the duration of my regret for the Red drawing now in the Quinn collection which hung here for some months waiting shipment; as I can attest the energy and vitality that filled this place while forty drawings of the Quinn assortment stood here waiting also; a demonstration of the difference between "cubism," _nature-morte-ism_ and the vortex of Lewis: sun, energy, sombre emotion, clean-drawing, disgust, penetrating analysis from the qualities finding literary expression in "Tarr" to the stasis of the Red Duet, from the metallic gleam of the "Timon" portfolio to the velvet-suavity of the later "Timon" of the Baker collection.

The animality and the animal satire, the dynamic and metallic properties, the social satire, on the one hand, the sunlight, the utter cleanness of the Red Duet, are all points in an astounding circumference; which will, until the work is adequately reproduced, have

more or less to be taken on trust by the "wider" public.

The novel "Tarr" is in print and no one need bother to read my critiques of it. It contains much that Joyce's work does not contain, but differentiations between the two authors are to the detriment of neither, one tries solely to discriminate qualities: hardness, fullness, abundance, weight, finish, all terms used sometimes with derogatory and sometimes with laudative intonation, or at any rate valued by one auditor and depreciated by another. The English prose fiction of my decade is the work of this pair of authors.

"TARR," BY WYNDHAM LEWIS[5]

"Tarr" is the most vigorous and volcanic English novel of our time. Lewis is the rarest of phenomena, an Englishman who has achieved the triumph of being also a European. He is the only English writer who can be compared with Dostoevsky, and he is more rapid than Dostoevsky, his mind travels with greater celerity, with more unexpectedness, but he loses none of Dostoevsky's effect of mass and of weight.

Tarr is a man of genius surrounded by the heavy stupidities of the half-cultured latin quarter; the book delineates his explosions in this oleaginous milieu; as well as the débâcle of the unintelligent emotion-dominated Kreisler. They are the two titanic characters in contemporary English fiction. Wells's clerks, Bennett's "cards" and even Conrad's Russian villains do not "bulk up" against them.

Only in James Joyce's "Stephen Dedalus" does one find an equal intensity, and Joyce is, by comparison, cold and meticulous, where Lewis is, if uncouth, at any rate brimming with energy, the man with a leaping mind.

Despite its demonstrable faults I do not propose to attack this novel.[6] It is a serious work, it is definitely an attempt to express, and very largely a success in expressing, something. The "average novel," the average successful commercial proposition at 6_s_ per 300 to 600 pages is nothing of the sort; it is merely a third-rate mind's imitation of a perfectly well-known type-novel; of let us say Dickens, or Balzac, or Sir A. Conan-Doyle, or Hardy, or Mr. Wells, or Mrs. Ward, or some other and less laudable proto-or necro-type.

A certain commercial interest attaches to the sale of these mimicries and a certain purely technical or trade or clique

interest may attach to the closeness or "skill" of the aping, or to the "application" of a formula. The "work," the opus, has a purely narcotic value, it serves to soothe the tired mind of the reader, to take said "mind" off its "business" (whether that business be lofty, "intellectual," humanitarian, sordid, acquisitive, or other). There is only one contemporary English work with which "Tarr" can be compared, namely James Joyce's utterly different "Portrait of the Artist." The appearance of either of these novels would be a recognized literary event had it occurred in any other country in Europe.

Joyce's novel is a triumph of actual writing. The actual arrangement of the words is worth any author's study. Lewis on the contrary, is, in the actual writing, faulty. His expression is as bad as that of Meredith's floppy sickliness. In place of Meredith's mincing we have something active and "disagreeable." But we have at any rate the percussions of a highly energized mind.

In both Joyce and Lewis we have the insistent utterance of men who are once for all through with the particular inanities of Shavian-Bennett, and with the particular oleosities of the Wellsian genre.

The faults of Mr. Lewis' writing can be examined in the first twenty-five pages. Kreisler is the creation of the book. He is roundly and objectively set before us. Tarr is less clearly detached from his creator. The author has evidently suspected this, for he has felt the need of disclaiming Tarr in a preface.

Tarr, like his author, is a man with an energized mind. When Tarr talks at length; when Tarr gets things off his chest, we suspect that the author also is getting them off his own chest. Herein the technique is defective. It is also defective in that it proceeds by general descriptive statements in many cases where the objective presentment of single and definite acts would be more effective, more convincing.

It differs from the general descriptiveness of cheap fiction in that these general statements are often a very profound reach for the expression of verity. In brief, the author is trying to get the truth and not merely playing baby-battledore among phrases. When Tarr talks little essays and makes aphorisms they are often of intrinsic interest, are even unforgettable. Likewise, when the author comments upon Tarr, he has the gift of phrase, vivid, biting,

pregnant, full of suggestion.

The engaging if unpleasant character, Tarr, is placed in an unpleasant milieu, a milieu very vividly "done." The reader retains no doubts concerning the verity and existence of this milieu (Paris or London is no matter, though the scene is, nominally, in Paris). It is the existence where:

"Art is the smell of oil paint, Henri Murger's *Vie de Bohême*, corduroy trousers, the operatic Italian model ... quarter given up to Art.--Letters and other things are round the corner.

"... permanent tableaux of the place, disheartening as a Tussaud's of The Flood."

Tarr's first impact is with "Hobson," whose "dastardly face attempted to portray delicacies of common sense, and gossamer-like back-slidings into the Inane, that would have puzzled a bile-specialist. He would occasionally exploit his blackguardly appearance and black-smith's muscles for a short time ... his strong piercing laugh threw A.B.C. waitresses into confusion."

This person wonders if Tarr is a "sound bird." Tarr is not a sound bird. His conversational attack on Hobson proceeds by a brandishing of false dilemma, but neither Hobson nor his clan, nor indeed any of the critics of the novel (to date) have observed that this is Tarr's faulty weapon. Tarr's contempt for Hobson is as adequate as it is justifiable.

"Hobson, he considered, was a crowd.--You could not say he was an individual.--He was a set. He sat there a cultivated audience.--He had the aplomb and absence of self-consciousness of numbers, of the herd--of those who know they are not alone....

"For distinguishing feature Hobson possessed a distinguished absence of personality.... Hobson was an humble investor."

Tarr addresses him with some frankness on the subject:

"As an off-set for your prying, scurvy way of peeping into my affairs you must offer your own guts, such as they are....

"You have joined yourself to those who hush their voices to hear what other people are saying....

"Your plumes are not meant to fly with, but merely to slouch and skip along the surface of the earth.--You wear the livery of a ridiculous set, you are a cunning and sleek domestic. No thought can come out of your head before it has slipped on its uniform. All your instincts are drugged with a malicious languor, an arm, a respectability, invented by a set of old women and mean, cadaverous little boys."

Hobson opened his mouth, had a movement of the body to speak. But he relapsed.

"You reply, 'What is all this fuss about? I have done the best for myself.'--I am not suited for any heroic station, like yours. I live sensibly, cultivating my vegetable ideas, and also my roses and Victorian lilies.--I do no harm to anybody."

"That is not quite the case. That is a little inexact. Your proceedings possess a herdesque astuteness; in the scale against the individual weighing less than the Yellow Press, yet being a closer and meaner attack. Also you are essentially _spies_, in a scurvy, safe and well-paid service, as I told you before. You are disguised to look like the thing it is your function to betray--What is your position?--You have bought for eight hundred pounds at an aristocratic educational establishment a complete mental outfit, a program of manners. For four years you trained with other recruits. You are now a perfectly disciplined social unit, with a profound _esprit de corps_. The Cambridge set that you represent is an average specimen, a cross between a Quaker, a Pederast, and a Chelsea artist.--Your Oxford brothers, dating from the Wilde decade, are a stronger body. The Chelsea artists are much less flimsy. The Quakers are powerful rascals. You represent, my Hobson, the _dregs_ of Anglo-Saxon civilization! There is nothing softer on earth.--Your flabby potion is a mixture of the lees of Liberalism, the poor froth blown off the decadent nineties, the wardrobe-leavings of a vulgar Bohemianism with its headquarters in Chelsea!

"You are concentrated, systematic slop.--There is nothing in the universe to be said for you...."

"A breed of mild pervasive cabbages, has set up a wide and creeping rot in the West of Europe.--They make it indirectly a peril and a tribulation for live things to remain in the neighborhood. You are a systematizing and vulgarizing of the individual.--You are not an individual...."

and later:

"You are libeling the Artist, by your idleness." Also, "Your pseudo-neediness is a sentimental indulgence."

All this swish and clatter of insult reminds one a little of Papa Karamazoff. Its outrageousness is more Russian than Anglo-Victorian, but Lewis is not a mere echo of Dostoievsky. He hustles his reader, jolts him, snarls at him, in contra-distinction to Dostoievsky, who merely surrounds him with an enveloping dreariness, and imparts his characters by long-drawn osmosis.

Hobson is a minor character in the book, he and Lowndes are little more than a prologue, a dusty avenue of approach to the real business of the book: Bertha, "high standard Aryan female, in good condition, superbly made; of the succulent, obedient, clear peasant type...."

Kreisler, the main character in the book, a "powerful" study in sheer obsessed emotionality, the chief foil to Tarr who has, over and above his sombre emotional spawn-bed, a smouldering sort of intelligence, combustible into brilliant talk, and brilliant invective.

Anastasya, a sort of super-Bertha, designated by the author as "swagger sex."

These four figures move, lit by the flare of restaurants and cafés, against the frowsy background of "Bourgeois Bohemia," more or less Bloomsbury. There are probably such Bloomsburys in Paris and in every large city.

This sort of catalogue is not well designed to interest the general reader. What matters is the handling, the vigor, even the violence, of the handling.

The book's interest is not due to the "style" in so far as "style" is generally taken to mean "smoothness of finish," orderly arrangement of sentences, coherence to the Flaubertian method.

It is due to the fact that we have here a highly-energized mind performing a huge act of scavenging; cleaning up a great lot of rubbish, cultural, Bohemian, romantico-Tennysonian, arty, societish, gutterish.

It is not an attack on the épiciér. It is an attack on a sort of super-épiciér desiccation. It is by no means a tract. If Hobson is so drawn as to disgust one with the "stuffed-shirt," Kreisler is equally a sign-post pointing to the advisability of some sort of intellectual or at least commonsense management of the emotions.

Tarr, and even Kreisler, is very nearly justified by the depiction of

the Bourgeois Bohemian fustiness: Fräulein Lippmann, Fräulein Fogs, etc.

What we are blessedly free from is the red-plush Wellsian illusionism, and the click of Mr. Bennett's cash-register finish. The book does not skim over the surface. If it does not satisfy the mannequin demand for "beauty" it at least refuses to accept margarine substitutes. It will not be praised by Katherine Tynan, nor by Mr. Chesterton and Mrs. Meynell. It will not receive the sanction of Dr. Sir Robertson Nicoll, nor of his despicable paper "The Bookman."

(There will be perhaps some hope for the British reading public, when said paper is no longer to be found in the Public Libraries of the Island, and when Clement Shorter shall cease from animadverting.) "Tarr" does not appeal to these people nor to the audience which they have swaddled. Neither, of course, did Samuel, Butler to their equivalents in past decades.

"Bertha and Tarr took a flat in the Boulevard Port Royal, not far from the Jardin des Plantes. They gave a party to which Fräulein Lippmann and a good many other people came. He maintained the rule of four to seven, roughly, for Bertha, with the uttermost punctiliousness. Anastasya and Bertha did not meet.

"Bertha's child came, and absorbed her energies for upwards of a year. It bore some resemblance to Tarr. Tarr's afternoon visits became less frequent. He lived now publicly with his illicit and splendid bride.

"Two years after the birth of the child, Bertha divorced Tarr. She then married an eye-doctor, and lived with a brooding severity in his company, and that of her only child.

"Tarr and Anastasya did not marry. They had no children. Tarr, however, had three children by a Lady of the name of Rose Fawcett, who consoled him eventually for the splendors of his 'perfect woman.' But yet beyond the dim though sordid figure of Rose Fawcett, another rises. This one represents the swing-back of the pendulum once more to the swagger side. The cheerless and stodgy absurdity of Rose Fawcett required the painted, fine and inquiring face of Prism Dirkes."

Neither this well-written conclusion, nor the opening tirade I have quoted, give the full impression of the book's vital quality, but they may perhaps draw the explorative reader.

"Tarr" finds sex a monstrosity, he finds it "a German study": "Sex, Hobson, is a German study. A German study."

At that we may leave it. "Tarr" "had no social machinery, but the cumbrous one of the intellect.... When he tried to be amiably he usually only succeeded in being ominous."

"Tarr" really gets at something in his last long discussion with Anastasya, when he says that art "has no inside." This is a condition of art, "to have no inside, nothing you cannot see. It is not something impelled like a machine by a little egoistic inside."

"Deadness, in the limited sense in which we use that word, is the first condition of art. The second is absence of soul, in the sentimental human sense. The lines and masses of a statue are its soul."

Joyce says something of the sort very differently, he is full of technical scholastic terms: "stasis, kinesis," etc. Any careful statement of this sort is bound to be bafoué, and fumbled over, but this ability to come to a hard definition of anything is one of Lewis' qualities lying at the base of his ability to irritate the mediocre intelligence. The book was written before 1914, but the depiction of the German was not a piece of war propaganda.

AN HISTORICAL ESSAYIST

LYTTON STRACHEY ON LEFT-OVER CELEBRITY

Mr. Strachey, acting as funeral director for a group of bloated reputations, is a welcome addition to the small group of men who continue what Samuel Butler began. The howls going up in the Times Lit. Sup. from the descendants of the ossements are but one curl more of incense to the new author.

His book is a series of epitomes, even the illustrations, from the peculiar expression of Mr. Gladstone's rascally face to the differently, but equally, peculiar expression of Newman's and the petrified settled fanatic will-to-power in Cardinal Manning's, are epitomes.

Whatever else we may be sure of, we may be sure that no age with any intellectual under-pinnings would have made so much fuss over these "figures." For most of us, the odor of defunct Victorianism is so unpleasant and the personal benefits to be derived from a study of the period so small that we are content to leave the past where we find it, or to groan at its leavings as they are, week by week, tossed up in the Conservative papers. The Victorian era is like a stuffy alley-way which we can, for the most part, avoid. We do not agitate for its destruction, because it does not greatly concern us; at least, we have no feeling of responsibility, we are glad to have moved on toward the open, or at least toward the patescent, or to have found solace in the classics or in eighteenth century liberations.

Mr. Strachey, with perhaps the onus of feeling that the "Spectator" was somewhere in his immediate family, has been driven into patient exposition. The heavy gas of the past decades cannot be dispersed by mere "BLASTS" and explosions. Mr. Strachey has undertaken a chemical dispersal of residues.

At the age of nine Manning devoured the Apocalypse. He read Paley at Harrow, and he never got over it. Impeded in a political career, he was told that the Kingdom of Heaven was open to him. "Heavenly ambitions" were suggested. The "Oxford Movement" was, in a minor way, almost as bad as the Italian Counter-Reformation. Zeal was prized more than experience. Manning was the child of his age, the enfant prodigue of it, who could take advantage of all its blessings. A fury of "religion" appears to have blazed through the period. This fury must be carefully distinguished from theology, which latter is an elaborate intellectual exercise, and can in its finest developments be used for sharpening the wits, developing the rational faculties (vide Aquinas). Theology, straying from the enclosures of religion, enters the purlieu of philosophy, and in some cases exacts stiff definitions.

Froude, Newman and Keble were part of an unfortunate retrogression, or, as Mr. Strachey has written, "Christianity had become entangled in a series of unfortunate circumstances from which it was the plain duty of Newman and his friends to rescue it." Keble desired an England "more superstitious, more bigoted, more gloomy, more fierce in its religion." Tracts for the Times were published. Pusey imagined that people practised fasting. It was a curious period. One should take it at length from Mr. Strachey.

The contemporary mind may well fail to note a difference between these retrogradists and the earlier nuisance John Calvin, who conceived the floors of hell paved with unbaptized infants half a span long. Mr. Strachey's patient exposition will put them right in the matter.

We have forgotten how bad it was, the ideas of the Oxford movement have faded out of our class, or at least the free moving men of letters meet no one still embedded in these left-overs. Intent on some system of thought interesting to themselves and their friends, they "lose touch with the public." And the "public," as soon as it is of any size, is full of these left-overs, full of the taste of F.T. Palgrave, of Keble's and Pusey's religion.

To ascertain the under-side of popular opinion, or I had better say popular assumption, one may do worse than read books of a period just old enough to appear intolerable.

(For example, if you wish to understand the taste displayed in the official literature of the last administration you must read anthologies printed between 1785 and 1837.)

Mr. Strachey's study of Manning is particularly valuable in a time when people still persist in not understanding the Papal church as a political organization exploiting a religion; its force, doubtless, has come, through the centuries, from men like Manning, balked in political careers, suffering from a "complex" of power-lust.

Among Strachey's "Eminent" we find one common characteristic, a sort of mulish persistence in any course, however stupid. One might develop the proposition that Nietzsche in his will-to-power "philosophy" was no more than the sentimental, inefficient German of the "old type" expressing an idolization of the British Victorian character.

Still it is hard to see how any people save those

che hannoo perduto il ben del intelletto

could have swallowed such shell-game propositions as those of Manning's, quoted on p. 98, concerning response to prayer.

The next essay is a very different matter. Mr. Strachey, without abandoning the acidity of his style, exposes Florence Nightingale as a great constructor of civilization. Her achievement remains, early victim of Christian voodooism, surrounded mainly by cads and imbeciles, it is a wonder her temper was not a great deal worse. She may well be pardoned a few hysterias, a few metaphysical bees in her cap. Even in metaphysics, if she was unable to improve on Confucius and Epicurus, she seems to have been quite as intelligent as many of her celebrated contemporaries who had no more solid basis for reputation than their "philosophic" writing. Our author has so branded Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and the physician Hall that no amount of apologia will reinstate them. Panmure is left as a goose, and Hawes as a goose with a touch of malevolence.

Queen Victoria appears several times in this essay, and effectively:

"It will be a very great satisfaction to me," Her Majesty added, "to make the acquaintance of one who has set so bright an example to our sex."

"The brooch, which was designed by the Prince Consort, bore a St. George's cross in red enamel, and the Royal cypher surmounted by diamonds. The whole was encircled by the inscription, 'Blessed are the Merciful.'"

Dr. Arnold of Rugby, to be as brief as possible with a none too pleasant subject, "substituted character for intellect in the training of British youth."

The nineteenth century had a "letch" for unifications, it believed that,

in general, "all is one"; when this doctrine failed of a sort of pragmatic sanction _in rem_, it tried to reduce things to the least possible number. True, in the physical world, it did not attempt to use steam and dynamite interchangeably, but, in affairs of the mind, such was the indubitable tendency.

It is, however, a folly to "substitute" character for intelligence and one would rather have been at the Grammar-School of Ashford, in Kent, in 1759, under Stephen Barrett, A.M., than at Rugby, in 1830, under Dr. Arnold, or, later, under any of his successors. And I give thanks to Zeus Sens _ὅστις ποτ' ἔστιν_, that being an American, I have escaped the British public school. Mrs. Ward is at liberty to write to the _Times_ as much as she likes, I do not envy her Dr. Arnold for grandfather.

Arnold stands pre-eminent as an "educator," and from him the term has gradually taken its present meaning: "a man with no intellectual interests."

Mr. Strachey completes his volume with a study of that extraordinary crank, General Gordon. It takes him two lines to blast the reputation of Lord Elgin. He does it quietly, but Elgin's name will stink in the memory of the reader. It is difficult to attribute this wholly to the author, for the facts are in connivance with him. But if his irony at times descends to sarcasm, one must balance that with the general quietude of his style. One can but hope that this book will not be his last; one would welcome a treatment, by him, of The Members of the British Academic Committee, British Publishers, The Asquith Administration.

The religion of Tien Wang mentioned on p. 221 appears to have been as intelligent as any other form of Christianity, and to have had much the same active effects. However, Gordon was appointed to oppose it. Throughout the rest of his life he seems to have been obsessed by the curious mediæval fallacy that the world is vanity and the body but ashes and dust. He fell victim to the exaggerated monotheism of his era. But he had the sense to follow his instinct in a period when instincts were not thought quite respectable; this made him an historic figure; it also must have lent him great charm (with perhaps rather picturesque drawbacks). This valuable quality, charm, must have been singularly lacking in Mr. Gladstone.

It is, indeed, difficult to restrain one's growing conviction that Mr. Gladstone was not all his party had hoped for. Gordon was "difficult," at the time of his last expedition he was perhaps little better than a lunatic, but Gladstone was decidedly unpleasant.

In all of the eminent was the quality of a singularly uncritical era. It was a time when a prominent man _could_ form himself on a single volume handed to him by "tradition"; when illiteracy, in the profounder sense

of that term, was no drawback to a vast public career. (An era, of course, happily closed.)

I do not know that there is much use enquiring into the causes of the Victorian era, or any good to be got from speculations. Its disease might seem to have been an aggravated form of provincialism. Professor Sir Henry Newbolt has recently pointed out that the English public is "interested in politics rather than literature"; this may be a lingering symptom.

If one sought, not perhaps to exonerate, but to explain the Victorian era one might find some contributory cause in Napoleon. That is to say, the Napoleonic wars had made Europe unpleasant, England was sensibly glad to be insular. Geography leaked over into mentality. Eighteenth century thought had indeed got rid of the Bourbons, but later events had shown that eighteenth century thought might be dangerous. England cut off her intellectual communications with the Continent. An era of bigotry supervened. We have so thoroughly forgotten, if we ever knew, the mental conditions preceding the Victorian era, save perhaps as they appear in the scribblings of, let us say, Lady Blessington, that we cannot tell whether the mentality of the Victorian reign was an advance or an appalling retrogression. In any case we are glad to be out of it ... irregardless of what we may be into; irregardless of whether the communications among intelligent people are but the mirage of a minute Thebaid seen from a chaos wholly insuperable.[7]

A LIST OF BOOKS

When circumstances have permitted me to lift up my prayer to the gods, of whom there are several, and whose multiplicity has only been forgotten during the less felicitous periods, I have requested for contemporary use, some system of delayed book reviewing, some system whereby the critic of current things is permitted to state that a few books read with pleasure five or six years ago can still be with pleasure perused, and that their claims to status as literature have not been obliterated by half or all of a decade.

GEORGE S. STREET

There was in the nineties, the late nineties and during the early years of this century, and still is, a writer named George S. Street. He has written some of the best things that have been thought concerning Lord Byron, he has written them not as a romanticist, not as a Presbyterian, but as a man of good sense. They are worthy of commendation. He has

written charmingly in criticism of eighteenth century writers, and of the ghosts of an earlier Piccadilly. He has written tales of contemporary life with a suavity, wherefrom the present writer at least has learned a good deal, even if he has not yet put it into scriptorial practice. (I haste to state this indebtedness.)

The writers of *_mœurs contemporaines_* are so few, or rather there are so few of them who can be treated under the heading "literature," that the discovery or circulation of any such writer is no mean critical action. Mr. Street is "quite as amusing as Stockton," with the infinite difference that Mr. Street has made literature. Essays upon him are not infrequent in volumes of English essays dealing with contemporary authors. My impression is that he is not widely read in America (his publishers will doubtless put me right if this impression is erroneous); I can only conclude that the possession of a style, the use of a suave and pellucid English has erected some sort of barrier.

"The Trials of the Bantocks," "The Wise and the Wayward," "The Ghosts of Piccadilly," "Books of Essays," "The Autobiography of a Boy," "Quales Ego," "Miniatures and Moods," are among his works, and in them the rare but intelligent reader may take refuge from the imbecilities of the multitude.

FREDERIC MANNING

In 1910 Mr. Manning published, with the almost defunct and wholly uncommendable firm of John Murray, "Scenes and Portraits," the opening paragraph of which I can still, I believe, quote from memory.

"When Merodach, King of Uruk, sat down to his meals, he made his enemies his footstool, for beneath his table he kept an hundred kings with their thumbs and great toes cut off, as signs of his power and clemency. When Merodach had finished eating he shook the crumbs from his napkin, and the kings fed themselves with two fingers, and when Merodach observed how painful and difficult this operation was, he praised God for having given thumbs to man.

"'It is by the absence of things,' he said, 'that we learn their use. Thus if we deprive a man of his eyes we deprive him of sight, and in this manner we learn that sight is the function of the eyes.'

"Thus spake Merodach, for he had a scientific mind and was curious of God's handiwork. And when he had finished speaking, his courtiers applauded him."

Adam is afterwards discovered trespassing in Merodach's garden or paradise. The characters of Bagoas, Merodach's high priest, Adam, Eve and the Princess Candace are all admirably presented. The book is divided in six parts: the incident of the Kingdom of Uruk, a conversation at the house of Euripides, "A Friend of Paul," a conversation between St. Francis and the Pope, another between Thomas Cromwell and Macchiavelli, and a final encounter between Leo XIII and Renan in Paradise.

This book is not to be neglected by the intelligent reader (_avis rarissima_, and in what minute ratio to the population I am still unable to discern).

* * * * *

"Others" Anthology for 1917. This last gives, I think, the first adequate presentation of Mina Loy and Marianne Moore, who have, without exaggerated "nationalism," without waving of banners and general phrases about Columbia gem of the ocean, succeeded in, or fallen into, producing something distinctly American in quality, not merely distinguishable as American by reason of current national faults.

Their work is neither simple, sensuous nor passionate, but as we are no longer governed by the _North American Review_ we need not condemn poems merely because they do not fit some stock phrase or rhetorical criticism.

(For example, an infinitely greater artist than Tennyson uses six "s's" and one "z" in a single line. It is one of the most musical lines in Provençal and opens a poem especially commended by Dante. Let us leave the realm of promoted typists who quote the stock phrases of text-books.)

In the verse of Marianne Moore I detect traces of emotion; in that of Mina Loy I detect no emotion whatever. Both of these women are, possibly in unconsciousness, among the followers of Jules Laforgue (whose work shows a great deal of emotion). Or perhaps René Ghil is the "influence" in Miss Moore's case. It is possible, as I have written, or intended to write elsewhere, to divide poetry into three sorts: (1) melopoeia, to wit, poetry which moves by its music, whether it be a music in words or an aptitude for, or suggestion of, accompanying music; (2) imagism, or poetry wherein the feelings of painting and sculpture are predominant (certain men move in phantasmagoria; the images of their gods, whole countrysides, stretches of hill land and forest, travel with them); and there is, thirdly, logopoeia, or poetry that is akin to nothing but language which is a dance of the intelligence among words and ideas and modifications of ideas and characters. Pope and the eighteenth-century writers had in this medium a certain limited range. The intelligence of

Laforque ran through the whole gamut of his time. T.S. Eliot has gone on with it. Browning wrote a condensed form of drama, full of things of the senses, scarcely ever pure logopoeia.

One wonders what the devil any one will make of this sort of thing who has not in their wit all the clues. It has none of the stupidity beloved of the "lyric" enthusiast and the writer and reader who take refuge in scenery, description of nature, because they are unable to cope with the human. These two contributors to the "Others" Anthology write logopoeia. It is, in their case, the utterance of clever people in despair, or hovering upon the brink of that precipice. It is of those who have acceded with Renan "La bêtise humaine est la seule chose qui donne une idée de l'infini." It is a mind cry, more than a heart cry. "Take the world if thou wilt but leave me an asylum for my affection," is not their lamentation, but rather "In the midst of this desolation, give me at least one intelligence to converse with."

The arid clarity, not without its own beauty, of *le tempérament de l'Américaine*, is in the poems of these, I think, graduates or post-graduates. If they have not received B.A.'s or M.A.'s or B.Sc.'s they do not need them.

The point of my praise, for I intend this as praise, even if I do not burst into the phrases of Victor Hugo, is that without any pretences and without clamors about nationality, these girls have written a distinctly national product, they have written something which would not have come out of any other country, and (while I have before now seen a deal of rubbish by both of them) they are, as selected by Mr. Kreymborg, interesting and readable (by me, that is. I am aware that even the poems before me would drive numerous not wholly unintelligent readers into a fury of rage-out-of-puzzlement.) Both these poetriæ have said a number of things not to be found in the current numbers of *Everybody's*, *the Century* or *McClure's*, "The Effectual Marriage," "French Peacock," "My Apish Cousins," have each in its way given me pleasure. Miss Moore has already prewritten her counterblast to my criticism in her poem "to a Steam Roller."

The anthology displays also Mr. Williams' praiseworthy opacity.

THE NEW POETRY

English and French literature have stood in constant need of each other, and it is interesting to note, as concurrent but in no way dependent upon the present alliance, a new French vitality among our younger writers of poetry. As some of these latter are too new to presuppose the reader's familiarity with them, I quote a few poems before venturing to

open a discussion. T.S. Eliot is the most finished, the most composed of these poets; let us observe his poem "The Hippopotamus," as it appears in The Little Review.

THE HIPPOPOTAMUS

The broad backed hippopotamus
Rests on his belly in the mud;
Although he seems so firm to us....
Yet he is merely flesh and blood.

Flesh-and-blood is weak and frail,
Susceptible to nervous shock;
While the True Church can never fail
For it is based upon a rock.

The hippo's feeble steps may err
In compassing material ends,
While the True Church need never stir
To gather in its dividends.

The potamus can never reach
The mango on the mango-tree,
But fruits of pomegranate and peach
Refresh the Church from over sea.

At mating time the hippo's voice
Betrays inflexions hoarse and odd,
But every week we hear rejoice
The Church, at being one with God.

The hippopotamus's day
Is past in sleep; at night he hunts;
God works in a mysterious way--
The Church can sleep and feed at once

I saw the potamus take wing
Ascending from the damp savannas,
And quiring angels round him sing
The praise of God, in loud hosannas.

Blood of the Lamb shall wash him clean
And him shall heavenly arms enfold,
Among the saints he shall be seen
Performing on a harp of gold.

He shall be washed as white as snow,
By all the martyr'd virgins kist,

While the True Church remains below
Wrapt in the old miasmal mist.

This cold sardonic statement is definitely of the school of Théophile Gautier; as definitely as Eliot's "Conversation Galante" is in the manner of Jules Laforgue. There is a great deal in the rest of Mr. Eliot's poetry which is personal, and in no wise derivative either from the French or from Webster and Tourneur; just as there is in "The Hippopotamus" a great deal which is not Théophile Gautier. I quote the two present poems simply to emphasize a certain lineage and certain French virtues and qualities, which are, to put it most mildly, a great and blessed relief after the official dullness and Wordsworthian lignification of the "Georgian" Anthologies and their descendants and derivatives as upheld by _The New Statesman_, that nadir of the planet of hebetude, that apogee of the kulturesque.

CONVERSATION GALANTE[8]

I observe: "Our sentimental friend the moon!
Or possibly (fantastic, I confess)
It may be Prester John's balloon
Or an old battered lantern hung aloft
To light poor travelers to their distress."
She then: "How you digress!"

And I then: "Some one frames upon the keys
That exquisite nocturne, with which we explain
The night and moonshine, music which we seize
To body forth our own vacuity."
She then: "Does this refer to me?"
"Oh no, it is I who am inane."

"You, madam, are the eternal humorist,
The eternal enemy of the absolute,
Giving our vagrant moods the slightest twist!
With your air indifferent and imperious
At a stroke our mad poetics to confute:--"
And--: "Are we then so serious?"

Laforgue's influence or Ghil's or some kindred tendency is present in the whimsicalities of Marianne Moore, and of Mina Loy. A verbalism less finished than Eliot's appears in Miss Moore's verses called--

PEDANTIC LITERALIST

Prince Rupert's drop, paper muslin ghost,
White torch "with power to say unkind

Things with kindness and the most
Irritating things in the midst of love and
Tears," you invite destruction.

You are like the meditative man
With the perfunctory heart; its
Carved cordiality ran
To and fro at first, like an inlaid and royal
Immutable production;

Then afterward "neglected to be
Painful" and "deluded him with
Loitering formality,
Doing its duty as if it did not,"
Presenting an obstruction

To the motive that it served. What stood
Erect in you has withered. A
Little "palmtree of turned wood"
Informs your once spontaneous core in its
Immutable reduction.

The reader accustomed only to glutinous imitations of Keats, diaphanous dilutions of Shelley, woolly Wordsworthian paraphrases, or swishful Swinburnianism will doubtless dart back appalled by Miss Moore's departures from custom; custom, that is, as the male or female devotee of Palgravian insularity understands that highly elastic term. The Palgravian will then with disappointment discover that his favorite and conventional whine is inapplicable. Miss Moore "rhymes in places." Her versification does not fit in with preconceived notions of *vers libre*. It possesses a strophic structure. The elderly Newboltian groans. The all-wool unbleached Georgian sighs ominously. Another author has been reading French poets, and using words for the communication of thought. Alas, times will not stay anchored.

Mina Loy has been equally subject to something like international influence; there are lines in her "Ineffectual Marriage" perhaps better written than anything I have found in Miss Moore, as, for example:--

"So here we might dispense with her
Gina being a female
But she was more than that
Being an incipience a correlative
an instigation to the reaction of man
From the palpable to the transcendent
Mollescent irritant of his fantasy

Gina had her use Being useful
contentedly conscious

She flowered in Empyrean
From which no well-mated woman ever returns

Sundays a warm light in the parlor
From the gritty road on the white wall
anybody could see it
Shimmered a composite effigy
Madonna crinolined a man
 hidden beneath her hoop.

Patience said Gina is an attribute
And she learned at any hour to offer
The dish appropriately delectable

What had Miovanni made of his ego
In his library
What had Gina wondered among the pots and pans
One never asked the other."

These lines are not written as Henry Davray said recently in the "Mercure de France," that the last "Georgian Anthology" poems are written, *_i.e._*, in search for "sentiments pour les accommoder à leur vocabulaire." Miss Loy's are distinctly the opposite, they are words set down to convey a definite meaning, and words accommodated to that meaning, even if they do not copy the mannerisms of the five or six by no means impeccable nineteenth century poets whom the British Poetry Society has decided to imitate.

All this is very pleasing, or very displeasing, according to the taste of the reader; according to his freedom from, or his bondage to, custom.

Distinct and as different as possible from the orderly statements of Eliot, and from the slightly acid whimsicalities of these ladies, are the poems of Carlos Williams. If the sinuosities and mental quirks of Misses Moore and Loy are difficult to follow I do not know what is to be said for, some of Mr. Williams' ramifications and abruptnesses. I do not pretend to follow all of his volts, jerks, sulks, balks, outbursts and jump-overs; but for all his roughness there remains with me the conviction that there is nothing meaningless in his book, "Al que quiere," not a line. There is whimsicality as we found it in his earlier poems. "The Tempers" (published by Elkin Mathews), in the verse to "The Coroner's Children," for example. There is distinctness and color, as was shown in his "Postlude," in "Des Imagistes"; but there is beyond these qualities the absolute conviction of a man with his feet on the soil, on a soil personally and peculiarly his own. He is rooted. He is at times almost inarticulate, but he is never dry, never without sap in abundance. His course may be well indicated by the change of the last few years; we found him six years ago in "The Postlude," full of a

thick and opaque color, full of emotional richness, with a maximum of subjective reality:

POSTLUDE

Now that I have cooled to you
Let there be gold of tarnished masonry,
Temples soothed by the sun to ruin
That sleep utterly.
Give me hand for the dances,
Ripples at Philæ, in and out,
And lips, my Lesbian,
Wall flowers that once were flame.

Your hair is my Carthage
And my arms the bow,
And our words the arrows
To shoot the stars,
Who from that misty sea
Swarm to destroy us.

But you there beside me---
Oh! how shall I defy you,
Who wound me in the night
With breasts shining like Venus and like Mars?
The night that is shouting Jason
When the loud eaves rattle
As with waves above me,
Blue at the prow of my desire.

O prayers in the dark!
O incense to Poseidon!
Calm in Atlantis.

From this he has, as some would say, "turned" to a sort of maximum objective reality in

THE OLD MEN

Old men who have studied
every leg show
in the city
Old men cut from touch
by the perfumed music--
polished or fleeced skulls
that stand before
the whole theatre

in silent attitudes
of attention,--
old men who have taken precedence
over young men
and even over dark-faced
husbands whose minds
are a street with arc-lights.
Solitary old men
for whom we find no excuses....

This is less savage than "Les Assis." His "Portrait of a Woman in Bed" incites me to a comparison with Rimbaud's picture of an old actress in her "loge." Not to Rimbaud's disadvantage. I don't know that any, save the wholly initiated into the cult of anti-exoticism, would take Williams' poem for an exotic, but there is no accounting for what may occur in such cases.

PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN IN BED

There's my things
drying in the corner;
that blue skirt
joined to the gray shirt--

I'm sick of trouble!
Lift the covers
if you want me
and you'll see
the rest of my clothes--
though it would be cold
lying with nothing on!

I won't work
and I've got no cash.
What are you going to do
about it?
----and no jewelry
(the crazy fools).

But I've my two eyes
and a smooth face
and here's this! look!
it's high!
There's brains and blood
in there--
my name's Robitza!
Corsets
can go to the devil--

and drawers along with them!
What do I care!

My two boys?
--they're keen!
Let the rich lady
care for them
they'll beat the school
or
let them go to the gutter--
that ends trouble.

This house is empty
isn't it?
Then it's mine
because I need it.
Oh, I won't starve
while there's the Bible
to make them feed me.

Try to help me
if you want trouble
or leave me alone--
that ends trouble.

The county physician
is a damned fool
and you
can go to hell!

You could have closed the door
when you came in;
do it when you go out.
I'm tired.

This is not a little sermon on slums. It conveys more than two dozen or two hundred magazine stories about the comedy of slum-work. As the memoir of a physician, it is keener than Spiess' notes of an advocate in the Genevan law courts. It is more compact than Vildrac's "Auberge," and has not Vildrac's tendency to sentiment. It is a poem that could be translated into French or any other modern language and hold its own with the contemporary product of whatever country one chose.

A DISTINCTION

A journalist has said to me: "We, i.e. we journalists, are like mediums. People go to a spiritist séance and hear what they want to hear. It is the same with a leading article: we write so that the reader will find what he wants to find."

That is the root of the matter; there is good journalism and bad journalism, and journalism that "looks" like "literature" and literature etc....

But the root of the difference is that in journalism the reader finds what he is looking for, whereas in literature he must find at least _a part of_ what the author intended.

That is why "the first impression of a work of genius" is "nearly always disagreeable." The public loathe the violence done to their self-conceit whenever any one conveys to them an idea that is his, not their own.

This difference is lasting and profound. Even in the vaguest of poetry, or the vaguest music, where the receiver may, or must make half the beauty he is to receive, there is always something of the author or composer which must be transmitted.

In journalism or the "bad art," there is no such strain on the public.

THE CLASSICS "ESCAPE"

It is well that the citizen should be acquainted with the laws of his country. In earlier times the laws of a nation were graven upon tablets and set up in the market place. I myself have seen a sign: "Bohemians are not permitted within the precincts of this commune"; but the laws of a great republic are too complex and arcane to permit of this simple treatment. I confess to having been a bad citizen, to just the extent of having been ignorant that at any moment my works might be classed in law's eye with the inventions of the late Dr. Condom.

It is possible that others with only a mild interest in literature may be equally ignorant; I quote therefore the law:

Section 211 of the United States Criminal Code provides:

"Every obscene, lewd, or lascivious, and every filthy book, pamphlet, picture, paper, letter, writing, print, or other publication of an indecent character and every article or thing designed, adapted, or

intended for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral use; and every article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing which is advertised or described in a manner calculated to lead another to use or apply it for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral purpose; and every written or printed card, letter, circular, book, pamphlet, advertisement, or notice of any kind giving information directly or indirectly, where, or how, or from whom, or by what means any of the hereinbeforementioned matters, articles, or things may be obtained or made, or where or by whom any act or operation of any kind for the procuring or producing of abortion will be done or performed, or how or by what means conception may be prevented or abortion produced, whether sealed or unsealed; and every letter, packet, or package, or other mail matter containing any filthy, vile or indecent thing, device, or substance; any and every paper, writing, advertisement, or representation that any article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing may, or can, be used or applied for preventing conception or producing abortion or for any indecent or immoral purpose; and every description calculated to induce or incite a person to so use or apply any such article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing, is hereby declared to be non-mailable matter and shall not be conveyed in the mails or delivered from any post-office or by any letter carrier. Whoever shall knowingly deposit, or cause to be deposited for mailing or delivery, anything declared by this section to be non-mailable, or shall knowingly take, or cause the same to be taken, from the mails for the purpose of circulating or disposing thereof, or of aiding in the circulation or disposition thereof, shall be fined not more than five thousand dollars, or imprisoned not more than five years, or both."

It is well that the citizens of a country should be aware of its laws.

It is not for me to promulgate obiter dicta; to say that whatever the cloudiness of its phrasing, this law was obviously designed to prevent the circulation of immoral advertisements, propaganda for secret cures, and slips of paper that are part of the bawdy house business; that it was not designed to prevent the mailing of Dante, Villon, and Catullus. Whatever the subjective attitude of the framers of this legislation, we have fortunately a decision from a learned judge to guide us in its working.

"I have little doubt that numerous really great writings would come under the ban if tests that are frequently current were applied, and these approved publications doubtless at times escape only because they come within the term "classics," which means, for the purpose of the application of the statute, that they are ordinarily immune from interference, because they have the sanction of age and fame and USUALLY APPEAL TO A COMPARATIVELY LIMITED NUMBER OF READERS."

The capitals are my own.

The gentle reader will picture to himself the state of America IF the classics were widely read; IF these books which in the beginning lifted mankind from savagery, and which from A.D. 1400 onward have gradually redeemed us from the darkness of medievalism, should be read by the millions who now consume Mr. Hearst and the _Ladies' Home Journal!!!!!!_

Also there are to be no additions. No living man is to contribute or to attempt to contribute to the classics. Obviously even though he acquire fame before publishing, he can not have the sanction of "age."

Our literature does not fall under an inquisition; it does not bow to an index arranged by a council. It is subject to the taste of one individual.

Our hundred and twenty millions of inhabitants desire their literature sifted for them by one individual selected without any examination of his literary qualifications.

I can not write of this thing in heat. It is a far too serious matter.

The classics "escape." They are "immune" "ordinarily." I can but close with the cadences of that blessed Little Brother of Christ, San Francesco d'Assisi:

CANTICO DEL SOLE

The thought of what America would be like
If the classics had a wide circulation
 Troubles my sleep,
The thought of what America,
The thought of what America,
The thought of what America would be like
 If the classics had a wide circulation
 Troubles my sleep,
Nunc dimittis, Now lettest thou thy servant,
Now lettest thou thy servant
 Depart in peace.
The thought of what America,
The thought of what America,
The thought of what America would be like
If the classics had a wide circulation....
 Oh well!
 It troubles my sleep.

Oravimus

[1] _Prufrock and Other Observations_, by T.S. Eliot. _The Egoist_, London. Essay first published in _Poetry_, 1917.

[2] A.D. 1917.

[3] _The Future_, May, 1918.

[4] "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man." Egoist, Ltd. London. Huebsch, New York.

[5] Little Review.

[6] Egoist, Ltd., 23, Adelphi Terrace House, Robert Street, W.C. 2. _6s_. net. Knopf, New York, \$1.50. Reviewed in _The Future._

[7] "Eminent Victorians," by Lytton Strachey.

[8] From "Prufrock." By T.S. Eliot. Egoist, Ltd.

SOME MISGIVINGS AS TO THE AMERICAN INVASION

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It is perhaps more than possible that among the interesting people one meets at luncheons and teas and dinners, there will be, or have been, other Americans; and this suggests the perilous question whether the English like the Americans better than formerly. An Englishman might counter by asking whether the Americans like the English better than formerly; but that would not be answering the question, which I hope to leave very much where I found it. Yet Americans have heard and read so much of their increasing national favor with their contemporary ancestors that they may be excused if not satisfied in a curiosity as to the fact. Is the universal favor which an emotional and imaginative press like ours has portrayed them as presently enjoying in England a reality, or is it one of the dreams which our press now and then indulges, and of which the best that can be said is that they do no harm?

One not only hears of this favor at home, but when one goes to England one still hears of it. To be sure one hears of it mainly from Americans, but they have the best means of knowing the fact; they are chiefly concerned, and they are supported in their belief by the almost unvaried amenity of the English journals, which now very rarely take the tone towards Americans formerly habitual with them. Their change of tone is the most obvious change which I think Americans can count upon noting when they come to England, and I am far from reckoning it insignificant. It did not happen of the newspapers themselves; it must be the expression of a prevalent mood, if not a very deeply rooted feeling in their readers. One hears of their interest, their kindness, not from the Americans alone; the English themselves sometimes profess it, and if they overestimate us, the generous error is in the right direction. At the end it must cease to be an error, for, as we Americans all know, we need only to be better understood in order to be more highly prized. Besides, liking is much oftener the effect of willing than has been supposed.

But if the case were quite the contrary, if it were obvious to the casual experience of the American traveller or sojourner in England, that his nationality was now liked less rather than more there, I should still be sorry to disturb what is at the worst no worse than a fond illusion. The case is by no means the contrary, and yet in consenting to some reason in the iridescence which the situation wears in the American fancy I should wish to distinguish. For a beginning I should not wish to go farther than to say that the sort of Englishmen who have always liked Americans, because they have liked the American ideal and the kind of

character realized from it, now probably like them better than ever. They are indeed less critical of our departure from our old ideal than some Americans, perhaps because they have not foreseen, as such Americans have foreseen, the necessary effect in American character. They can still allow themselves the pleasure which comes from being confirmed in an impression by events, and in that pleasure they may somewhat romance us; but even such Englishmen are not blindly fond of us. The other sort of Englishmen, the sort that never liked our ideal or our character, probably now like us as little as ever, except as they have noted our change of ideal, and expect a change of character. To them we may very well have seemed a sort of civic dissenters, with the implication of some such quality of offence as the notion of dissent suggests to minds like theirs. We had a political religion like their own, with a hierarchy, a ritual, an establishment all complete, and we violently broke with it. But it is safe to conjecture that this sort of Englishman is too old or too old-fashioned to live much longer; he suffers with the decay of certain English interests which the American prosperity imperilled before it began to imperil English ideals, if it has indeed done so. His dying out counts for an increase of favor for us; we enjoy through it a sort of promotion by seniority.

But a new kind of Englishman has come up of late years, and so far as he is friendly to us his friendliness should be more gratifying than that even of our older friends. He has been in America, either much or little, and has come to like us because he has seen us at home. If such an Englishman is rich and noble, he has seen our plutocracy, and has liked it because it is lively and inventive in its amusements and profusely original in its splendors; but he need not be poor and plebeian to have seen something of our better life, and divined something of our real meaning from it. He will not be to blame if he has not divined our whole meaning; for we are at present rather in the dark as to that ourselves, and certainly no American who met him in England could wish to blame him, for his cordiality forms the warmest welcome that the American can have there. If he has been in America and not liked us, or our order or ideal, he has still the English good-nature, and if you do not insist upon being taken nationally, there are many chances that he will take you personally, and if he finds you not at all like an American, he will like you, as he liked others in America whom he found not at all like Americans.

It is the foible, however, of many Americans, both at home and abroad, that they want to be taken nationally, and not personally, by foreigners. Beyond any other people we wish to be loved by other peoples, even by others whom we do not love, and we wish to be loved in the lump. We would like to believe that somehow our sheer Americanism rouses the honor and evokes the veneration of the alien, and as we have long had a grudge against the English, we would be particularly glad to forget it in a sense of English respect and affection. We would fain believe that the English have essentially changed towards us, but we

might easily deceive ourselves, as we could realize if we asked ourselves the reasons for such a change.

The English are very polite, far politer than they have been represented, and they will not wittingly wound the American visitor, unless for just cause, like business, or the truth. Still, I should say that the American will fare best with them if he allows himself to be taken individually, rather than typically. One's nationality is to others, after a first moment of surprise, a bore and a nuisance, which cannot be got out of the way too soon. I cannot keep my interest in a German or an Italian because he is such; and why should not it be the same with an Englishman in regard to Americans? If he thinks about our nationality at all, in its historical character, it is rather a pill, which he may be supposed to take unwillingly, whether he believes we were historically right or not. He may say just things about it, but he will say them more for the profit of Englishmen than for the pleasure of Americans. With our pleasure nationally an Englishman is very little concerned, and either he thinks it out of taste to show any curiosity concerning us, in the bulk, or else he feels none. He has lately read and heard a good deal of talk about us; but I doubt if it has indelibly impressed him. If we have lately done things which in their way could not be ignored, they could certainly be forgotten, and many Englishmen, in spite of them, still remain immensely incurious about us. The American who wishes to be taken nationally by them must often inspire them with a curiosity about us, before he can gratify it, and that is a species of self-indulgence which leaves a pang.

The English have, or they often express, an amiable notion of us as enormously rich, and perhaps they think we are vain of our millionaires, and would be flattered by an implication of wealth as common to us all as our varying accent. But it is as hard for some of us to live up to a full pocket as for others to live up to a full brain. It is hard even to meet the expectation that you will know, or know about, our tremendously moneyed people; but here is a curiosity which you do not have to inspire before you gratify it, for it exists already, while as to our political affairs, or even our military or naval affairs, not to speak of our scientific or literary affairs, the curiosity that you gratify you must first have inspired.

Their curiosity as to our riches does not judge the English, as might be supposed. They are very romantic, with a young, lusty appetite for the bizarre and the marvellous, as their taste in fiction evinces; and they need not be condemned as sordid admirers of money because they wish to know the lengths it can go to with the people who seem to be just now making the most money. Their interest in a phenomenon which we ourselves have not every reason to be proud of, is not without justification, as we must allow if we consider a little, for if we consider, we must own that our greatest achievement in the last twenty or thirty years has been in the heaping up of riches. Our magnificent success in that sort

really eclipses our successes in every other, and the average American who comes abroad must be content to shine in the reflected glory of those Americans who have recently, more than any others, rendered our name illustrious. If we do not like the fact all that we have to do is to set about doing commensurate things in art, in science, in letters, or even in arms.

It will not quite do to say that the non-millionaire American enjoys in England the interest mixed with commiseration which is the lot of a poor relation of the great among kindly people. That would not be true, and possibly the fact is merely that the name American first awakens in the English some such associations with riches as the name South African awakened before it awakened others more poignant and more personal. Already the South African had begun to rival the American in the popular imagination; as the Boer war fades more and more into the past, the time may come when we shall be confusedly welcomed as Africanders or South Americans.

If I were to offer what I have been saying as my opinions, or my conclusions from sufficient observations I should be unfair, if not uncandid. The sum of what one sees and hears in a foreign country is as nothing to the sum of what one does not see and hear; and the immense balance may be so far against the foregoing inferences that it is the part of mere prudence to declare that they are not my opinions or conclusions, but are only impressions, vague and hurried, guesses from cursory observations, deductions from slight casual incidents. They are mere gleams from social facets, sparks struck out by chance encounter, and never glancing lights from the rarefied atmosphere in which the two nations have their formal reciprocities. For all that I have really the right to say from substantial evidence to the contrary, I might very well say that the English value us for those things of the mind and soul which we are somewhat neglectful of ourselves, and I insist the more, therefore, that it is only their love of fairy-tales which is taken with the notion of an opulence so widespread among us as to constitute us a nation of potential, if not actual, millionaires.

They would hasten to reproach me, I am afraid, for speaking of England, though merely for purposes of illustration, as a foreign country. One is promptly told that Americans are not regarded as foreigners in England, and is left to conjecture one's self a sort of compromise between English and alien, a little less kin than Canadian and more kind than Australian. The idea has its quaintness; but the American in England has been singularly unfortunate if he has had reason to believe that the kindness done him is not felt. What has always been true of the English is true now. They do not say or do the thing which is not, out of politeness; their hypocrisies, if they have any, are for their God, and not for their fellow-man. When they talk of their American brethren, they mean it; just as when they do not talk of them so they mean something less, or nothing at all. The American who wishes to be taken

nationally, may trust any expression friendly to our nation that he hears; but still I think he will have a better time if he prefers being taken personally. That is really making one's self at home in a different, I will no longer say a foreign, country; the English are eager hosts, and wish you to make yourself at home--if they like you. Nationally we cannot make ourselves, or be made at home, except in the United States. To any other people, to people sometimes claiming to be nearer than the first degree of cousinship, our nationality, taking it in bulk, is necessarily a mystery. We are so very like them; why should we be so very unlike them? The difference puzzles them, annoys them; why seek points of it, and turn them to the light? The same mystery distresses the American when the points of their difference are turned to the light. A man's nationality is something he is justly proud of, but not till it is put aside can the man of another nation have any joy of him humanly, spiritually. If you insist upon talking to the English about American things, you have them in an unknown world, a really unknowable world, as you yourself know it; and you bewilder and weary them, unless they are studying Americanism, and then they still do not understand you. You are speaking English, but the meaning is a strange tongue.

I say again that I do not know why any one should wish to be caressed for his nationality. I think one might more self-respectfully wish to be liked for one's self than joined with a hundred million compatriots, and loved in the lump. If the English, however, are now trying to love us nationally we should be careful not to tax their affections too heavily, or demand too much of them. We must remember that they are more apt to be deceived by our likeness to themselves than by our unlikeness. When an Englishman and an American meet on common ground they have arrived from opposite poles. The Englishman, though he knows the road the American has come, cannot really imagine it. His whole experience of life has taught him that if you have come that road, you are not the kind of man you seem; therefore, you have not come that road, or else you are another kind of man. He revolves in a maze of hopeless conjecture; he gives up trying to guess your conundrum, and reads into you the character of some Englishman of parallel tradition. If he likes you after that, you may be sure it is for yourself and not for your nation. All the same he may not know it, and may think he likes you because you are an agreeable American.

My line of reasoning, or I had better say of fancying (that, on such dangerous ground, is safest), is forcing an inference from which I shrink a little; it seems so very bold, so very contrary to recent prepossessions. But the candor which I would be so glad not to practise, obliges me to say that I think the American who is himself interesting, would have been as welcome in England twenty-five years ago as at this day, and he would not have been expected to be rich, or to have the acquaintance of rich Americans. Already, at that remote period, certain fellow-countrymen of ours had satisfied the English taste for wildness

in us. There had been Buffalo Bill, with his show, and there had been other Buffalo Bills, literary ones, who were themselves shows. There had then arisen a conjecture, a tardy surmise, of an American fineness, which might be as well in its way as the American wildness, and the American who had any imaginable touch of this found as warm a liking ready for him then as the wild American found earlier, or the rich American finds later.

In fact, interesting Americans have always been personally liked in England, if I must really go to the extreme of saying it. What the English now join in owning, if the question of greater kindness between the two countries comes up, is that their ruling class made a vast mistake in choosing, officiously though not officially, the side of the South in our Civil War. They own it frankly, eagerly. But they owned the same thing frankly, if not so eagerly, twenty-five years ago. Even during the Civil War, I doubt if an acceptable American would have suffered personally among them. He would have suffered nationally, but he has now and then to suffer so still, for they cannot have the same measure of his nationality as he, and they necessarily tread upon its subtle circumferences here and there.

From the very beginning of Americanism the case has been the same. The American in England during the Civil War was strangely unfortunate if he did not meet many and great Englishmen who thought and felt with him; and if there were now any American so stricken in years as to be able to testify from his own experience of the English attitude towards us in the War of Independence, he could tell us of the outspoken and constant sympathy of Chatham, Burke, Fox, Walpole, and their like, with the American cause--which they counted the English cause. He could tell of the deep undercurrent of favor among the English people, which the superficial course of power belied and at last ceased to control, in our earlier vital war as well as in our later.

So much for that consideration of us nationally, which I do not think England, in her quality of hostess, is bound to show her several American guests. I do not blame her that the sympathy of her greatest sons, so far as it has been shown us nationally, has been shown in her interest, which they believed the supreme interest of mankind, rather than in our interest, which it is for us to believe the supreme interest of mankind. Even when they are talking America they are thinking England; they cannot otherwise; they must; it is imperative; it is essential that they should. We talk of England on the same terms, with our own inner version.

There is another point in this inquiry which I hesitate to touch, and which if I were better advised I should not touch--that is, the English interest in the beauty and brilliancy of our women. Their charm is now magnanimously conceded and now violently confuted in their public prints; now and then an Englishman lets himself go--over his own

signature even, at times--and denounces our women, their loveliness, their liveliness, their goodness, in terms which if I repeated them would make some timider spirits pause in their resolution to marry English dukes and run English society. But his hot words are hardly cold before another Englishman comes to the rescue of our countrywomen, and lifts them again to that pinnacle where their merits quite as much as the imagination of their novelists have placed them. Almost as much as our millionaires they are the object of a curiosity which one has not had to inspire. Where, in what part, in which favored city, do they most abound? What is the secret of their dazzling wit and beauty, the heart of their mystery? The most ardent of their votaries must flush in generous deprecation when those orphic inquiries flow from lips quite as divine as their own.

For the rest, if there is really that present liking for Americans in England, which we must wish to touch with all delicacy as the precious bloom of a century-plant at last coming to flower, the explanation may be sought perhaps in an effect of the English nature to which I shall not be the one to limit it. They have not substantially so much as phenomenally changed towards us. They are, like ourselves, always taking stock, examining themselves to see what they have on hand. From time to time they will, say, accuse themselves of being insular, and then, suddenly, they invite themselves to be continental, to be French, to be German, to be Italian, to be Bulgarian, or whatever; and for a while they believe that they have become so. All this time they remain immutably English. It is not that they are insensible of their defects; they tell themselves of them in clamorous tones; and of late, possibly, they have asked themselves why they are not what they think the Americans are in certain things. If the logic of their emotions in this direction were a resolution to like all the Americans with a universal affection, I should admire their spirit, but I should feel a difficulty in its operation for a reason which I hesitate to confess; I do not like all the Americans myself.

MAHLER

from: The Project Gutenberg EBook of **Musical Portraits**, by Paul Rosenfeld

Almost simultaneously with the rise of Russian music and the new birth of French music, that of Germany has deteriorated. The great line of composers which descended from Bach and Haendel for two centuries has wavered and diminished visibly during the last three decades. The proud tradition seems to have reached a temporary halt in Wagner and Bruckner and Brahms. It may be that modern Germany is a difficult terrain, that the violent change in conditions of life, the furious acceleration, has created, for the time being, a soil unusually inimical to the disclosure of perfect works of art. The blight on the entire new generation of composers would seem to point to some such common cause. There is, no doubt, a curious coincidence in the fact that in each of the four chief German musicians of the recent period there should be manifest in some degree a failure of artistic instinct. The coarsening of the craftsmanship, the spiritual bankruptcy, of the later Strauss, the grotesque pedantry of Reger, the intellectualism with which the art of Schoenberg has always been tainted, and by which it has been corrupted of late, the banality of Mahler, dovetail suspiciously. And yet, it is probable that the cause lies elsewhere, and that the conjunction of these four men is accidental. There have been, after all, few environments really friendly to the artist; most of the masters have had to recover from a "something rotten in the state of Denmark," and many of them have surmounted conditions worse than those of modern Bismarckian Germany. The cause of the unsatisfactoriness of much of the music of Strauss and Schoenberg, Reger and Mahler, is doubtless to be found in the innate weakness of the men themselves rather more than in the unhealthiness of the atmosphere in which they passed their lives.

Still, the case of Mahler makes one hesitate a while before passing judgment. Whereas it is probable that Richard Strauss would have deteriorated no matter how friendly the age in which he lived, that Reger would have been just as much a pedant had he been born in Paris instead of in Bavaria, that Schoenberg would have developed into his mathematical frigidity wherever he resided, it is possible that Mahler's fate might have been different had he not been born in the Austria of the 1860's. For if Mahler's music is pre-eminently a reflection of Beethoven's, if he never spoke in authentic accents, if out of his vast dreams of a great modern popular symphonic art, out of his honesty, his sincerity, his industry, his undeniably noble and magnificent traits, there resulted only those unhappy boring colossi that are his nine symphonies, it is indubitably, to a great extent, the consequence of the fact that he, the Jew, was born in a society that made Judaism, Jewish descent and Jewish traits, a curse to those that inherited them. The destiny that had made him Jew decreed that, did he speak out fully,

he would have to employ an idiom that would recall the harsh accents of the Hebrew language quite as much as that of any tongue spoken by the peoples of Europe. It decreed that, whatever the history of the art he practised, whatever the character of the age in which he lived, he could not impress himself upon his medium without impregnating it with the traits he inherited from his ancestors. It decreed that in speaking he would have to suffuse musical art with the qualities and characteristics engraved in the stock by the history and vicissitudes of his race, by its age-long sojourn in the deserts of Arabia and on the barren hills of Syria, by the constraint of its religion and folkways, by its titanic and terrible struggle for survival against the fierce peoples of Asia, by the marvelous vitality and self-consciousness and exclusiveness that carried it whole across lands and times, out of the eternal Egypt through the eternal Red Sea. But it was just the racial attributes, the racial gesture and accent, that a man in Mahler's position found inordinately difficult to register. For Austrian society put a great price on his suppression of them. It permitted him to participate in its activities only on the condition that he did not remind it continually of his alienhood, of his racial consciousness. It permitted him the sense of equality, of fraternity, of citizenship, only on the condition that he should seek to suppress within himself all awareness of his descent and character and peculiarities, and attempt to identify himself with its members, and try to feel just as they felt and speak just as they spoke.

For if Austro-German society had admitted the Jews to civil rights, it had made them feel as never before the old hatred and malediction and exclusion. The walls of the ghettos had, after all, prevented the Jew from feeling the full force of the disability under which he labored, insomuch as they had repressed in him all desire to mingle in the life of the country in which he found himself. But in exciting his gregariousness, in appearing to allow him to participate in the public life, in both inviting and repelling him, a community like that of Austria, still so near the Middle Ages, made him feel in all its terrible might the handicap of race, the mad hatred and contempt with which it punished his descent. And it is but natural that amongst those very Jews best fitted to take part in affairs, and consequently most sensitive to the ill-will that barred them from power and success, there should be aroused, despite all conscious efforts neither to surrender nor to shrink, an unconscious desire to escape the consequences of the thing that stamped them in the eyes of the general as individuals of an inferior sort; to inhibit any spiritual gesture that might arouse hostility; and to ward off any subjective sense of personal inferiority by convincing themselves and their fellows that they possessed the traits generally esteemed.

So a ruinous conflict was introduced into the soul of Gustav Mahler. In the place of the united self, there came to exist within him two men. For while one part of him demanded the free complete expression

necessary to the artist, another sought to block it for fear that in the free flow the hated racial traits would appear. For Mahler would have been the first to have been repelled by the sound of his own harsh, haughty, guttural, abrupt Hebrew inflection. He would have been the first to turn in contempt from his own gestures. There was in him the frenetic unconscious desire to rid himself of the thing he had come to believe inferior. And rather than express it, rather than speak in his proper idiom, he made, unaware to himself, perhaps, the choice of speaking through the voices of other men, of the great German composers; of imitating them instead of developing his own personality; of accepting sterility and banality and impotence rather than achieving a power of speech.

And so his work became the doubtful and bastard thing it is, a thing of lofty and original intentions unrealized, of large powers misapplied, of great and respectable creative efforts that did not succeed in bringing into being anything really new, really whole. Of what Mahler might have achieved had he not been the divided personality, his symphonies, even as they stand, leave no doubt. If Mahler is not a great man, he is at least the silhouette of one. The need of expression that drove him to composition was indubitably mighty. The passion with which he addressed himself to his labor despite all discouragement and lack of success, the loftiness and nobleness of the task which he set for himself, the splendor of the intentions, reveal how fierce a fire burnt in the man. He was not one of those who come to music to form little jewels. On the contrary, in gesture he was ever one of the eminently faithful. He came to music to create a great, simple, popular symphonic art for these latter days, a thing of broad lines and simple contours and spiritual grandeur. He sought to express sincerely his deep, real sorrow, his choking homesickness for the something which childhood seems to possess and maturity to be without; to dream himself into childlike, paradisaic joys and wake himself to faith and action once again. He attempted to create a musical language that would be gigantic and crude and powerful as Nature herself; tried to imbue the orchestra with the Dionysiac might of sun and winds and teeming clay; wished to be able to say of his symphonies, "Hier röhrt die Natur." To a friend who visited him at his country house in Toblach and commented upon the mountains surrounding the spot, Mahler jestingly replied, "Ich hab' sie alle fortcomponiert." And he had large and dramatic programs for his symphonies. The First should have been a sort of Song of Youth, a farewell to the thing that is alive in us before we meet the world, and is shattered in the collision. The Second should have been the Song of Death, the music of the knowledge of death. The Third was conceived as a Song of the Great Pan--his "gaya scienza," Mahler would have liked to call it. In the Fourth he sought to open the heart of a child; in the Sixth, to voice his desolation and loneliness and hopelessness; in the Eighth, to perform a great religious ceremony; in "Das Lied von der Erde" to write his "Tempest," his epilogue.

And in general plan, his symphonies are original enough. Mahler was completely emancipated of all the old prejudices concerning the nature of the symphony. He conceived the form anew. "Mir heiszt Symphonic," he is reported to have said, "mit allen mitteln der vorhändigen Technik mir eine Welt aufbauen." He conceived the form particularly with reference to the being, the exigencies, the frame, of the modern concert hall. He realized that the shortness of the classic symphonies handicaps them severely in the present day. For modern audiences require an hour and a half or two hours of musical entertainment. In order to fill the concert programs, the symphony has to be associated with other works. In consequence it loses in effectiveness. So, taking hints from the Ninth of Beethoven and the "Roméo" of Berlioz, Mahler boldly planned symphonies that could stand alone and fill an evening. Beginning with his Second, he increased the number of movements, dropping the inevitable suite of allegro, andante, scherzo, rondo; prescribed intermissions of a certain length; and added choruses and vocal solos to give the necessary relief to the long orchestral passages. In the Second, he placed between an allegretto and a scherzo a soprano setting of one of the lyrics out of "Des Knaben Wunderhorn," and concluded the work with a choral setting of one ode of Klopstock's. In the Third Symphony, he preceded the orchestral finale with an alto solo composed on "Das Trunkene Lied" of Nietzsche, and with a chorus employing the words of another of the naïve poems in the anthology of Arnim and Brentano. The Eighth is simply a choral setting of the "Veni, Creator" and the closing scene of Goethe's "Faust." And in the Fifth Symphony, one of those in which he called for no vocal performers, he nevertheless managed to vary and expand the conventional suite by preceding the first allegro with a march, and separating and relieving the gargantuan scherzo and rondo with an adagietto for strings alone.

His material he organized fairly independently of the old rules. He was one of those who seem to have learned from Liszt that the content of a piece must condition its form. Mahler's symphonies resemble symphonic poems. They are essentially dramatic in character. Although he strove continually for classic form, his works nevertheless reveal their programmatic origin. He was at heart one of the literary composers. But he was a better craftsman than most of them are. He was a finer workman than Strauss, for instance. His scores are much more bony. They are free of the mass of insignificant detail that clutters so many of Strauss's. He could asseverate with some justice, "I have never written an insincere note." And although his orchestration is not revolutionary, and is often commonplace enough, he nevertheless oftentimes employed an instrumental palette distinctly his own. He utilized instead of the violin the trumpet as premier instrument of the band; achieved all manner of brilliant effects with it. He increased the variety and usefulness of the instruments of percussion, forming out of them a new family of instruments to balance the families of the strings, brass, and wood-wind. In the score of the Second Symphony he calls for six timpani, bass and snare-drums, a high and a low tam-tam, cymbals, a triangle,

glockenspiel, three deep-toned bells, in the chief orchestra; besides a bass-drum, triangle and cymbals in the supplementary. In the Eighth Symphony, the instruments of percussion form a little band by themselves. And he utilized the common instruments in original fashion, made the harps imitate bells, the wood-wind blow fanfares, the horns hold organ-points; combined piccolos with bassoons and contrabasses, wrote unisons for eight horns, let the trombones run scales----

But there is not one of poor Mahler's nine symphonies, honest and dignified as some of them are, that exists as fresh, new-minted, vivid music. His genius never took musical flesh. His scores are lamentably weak, often arid and banal. There is surely not another case in musical history in which indubitable genius, a mighty need of expression, a distinctly personal manner of sensation, a respectable musical science, a great and idealistic effort, achieved results so unsatisfactory. One wonders whether Mahler the composer was not, after all, the greatest failure in music. If there is any music that is eminently Kapellmeistermusik, eminently a routine, reflective, dusty sort of musical art, it is certainly Mahler's five latter symphonies. The musical Desert of Sahara is surely to be found in these unhappy compositions. They are monsters of ennui, and by their very pretentiousness, their gargantuan dimensions, throw into cruelest relief Mahler's essential sterility. They seek to be colossal and achieve vacuity chiefly. They remind one of nothing so much as the huge, ugly, misshapen "giants" that stand before the old Palace in Florence, work of the obscure sculptor who thought to outdo Michelangelo by sheer bulk. And the first four of his symphonies, though less utterly banal and pedantic, are still amorphous and fundamentally second-hand. For Mahler never spoke in his own idiom. His style is a mongrel affair. The thematic material is almost entirely derivative and imitative, of an unequaled mediocrity and depressingness. One wonders whether indeed there has ever been a respectable composer who has utilized ideas as platitudinous as the ones employed in the first movement of the First Symphony, or the brassy, pompous theme that opens the Eighth, or the tune to which in the latter work the mystic stanza beginning

"Alles vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnisz"

is intoned. One wonders whether any has used themes more saccharine and characterless than those of the last movement of the Third Symphony, or the adagio of the Fourth. Once in a while, no doubt, a vague personal tone, a flavor of the Bohemian countryside where Mahler was born, does manage to distinguish itself from the great inchoate masses of his symphonies. The strolling musician plays on his clarinet; peasants sit at tables covered with red cloths and drink beer; Hans and Gretel dance; evening falls; the brooks run silvered; from the barracks resound the

Austrian bugle calls; old soldier songs, that may have been sung in the Seven Years' War, arise; the watchman makes his sleepy rounds.

But, for the most part, it is precisely the personal tone that his music completely lacks. For he was never himself. He was everybody and nobody. He was forever seeking to be one composer or another, save only not Gustav Mahler. The fatal assimilative power of the Jew is revealed nowhere in music more sheerly than in the style of Mahler. Romain Rolland discovers alone in the Fifth Symphony reminiscences of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, Bach and Chabrier. Schubert flits persistently through Mahler's scores, particularly through that of the Third Symphony, whose introductory theme for eight horns recalls almost pointedly the opening of the C-major of Schubert, without, however, in the least recapturing its effectiveness. Bruckner, Mahler's teacher, is also incessantly reflected by these works, by the choral themes which Mahler is so fond of embodying in his compositions, and, more particularly, by the length and involutions of so many of the themes of his later symphonies. For, like Bruckner's, they appear chosen with an eye to their serviceability for contrapuntal deformation and dissection. Wagner, Haydn, Schumann and Brahms, the sentimental *Wienerwald* Brahms, also pass incessantly through these scores. But it was Beethoven whom Mahler sought chiefly to emulate. Over his symphonies (and it is a curious fact that Mahler, like the three men that he most frequently imitated, Schubert, Bruckner, and Beethoven, wrote just nine symphonies), over his entire work, his songs as well as his orchestral pieces, there lies the shadow of the Master of Bonn. Mahler was undoubtedly Beethoven's most faithful disciple. All his life he was seeking to write the "Tenth Symphony," the symphony that Beethoven died before composing. He was continually attempting to approximate the other's grand, pathetic tone, his broad and self-righteous manner. His music is full of but slightly disguised quotations. The trumpet-theme that ushers in Mahler's Fifth Symphony, for instance, appears the result of an attempt to cross the theme of the funeral march of the "Eroica Symphony" with the famous four raps of Beethoven's Fifth. In the first movement of the Second Symphony, just before the appearance on the oboe of the scarcely disguised "Sleep" motif from "Die Walküre," a theme almost directly lifted out of Beethoven's violin concerto is announced on the 'cellos and horns. And the andante of the same symphony derives from both the allegretto of Beethoven's Eighth and the andante of his "Pastoral Symphony"; might, indeed, figure as a sort of "Szene am Bach" through which there flow the yellowish tides of the Danube. Beethoven is recalled by some of Mahler's triumphant finales, particularly by those of the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies, and by many of Mahler's adagio passages. "Es sucht der Bruder seinen Bruder," oh, how often and at what length through Mahler's symphonies, and with what persistency on the tenor trumpet! And how often in them does not the German family man take his children walking in the woods of a Sunday afternoon and bid them worship their Creator for having implanted the Love of Virtue in the Human Heart!

Just as it was inevitable that Mahler, instead of developing his own artistic individuality, should seek all his life to identify himself with certain other composers, so, too, it was inevitable that it should be Beethoven whom he would most sedulously emulate. For not only was Beethoven the great classic presence of the German concert hall, and deemed, in the words of Lanier, the "dear living lord of tone," the "sole hymner of the whole of life." He was also, of all the masters, the one spiritually most akin to Mahler. For Beethoven was also one of those who wish to endow their art with moral grandeur, give it power to rouse the noblest human traits, to make it communicate ethical and philosophical conceptions. He, too, came to his art with a magnanimous hope of invigorating and consoling and redeeming his brothers, of healing the wounds of life and binding all men in the bonds of fraternity. Torn between desire of self-expression, and fear of self-revelation, Mahler found the solution of his conflict in this particular piece of self-identification.

And had Mahler been able really to be himself alone, to develop his own individuality, he would no doubt have been the thing he most desired to be, and given the world a new Beethoven. But, as imitator, he is far from being Beethoven! Whatever Beethoven's limitations (and they were many, for all that the worshiping crowd may say), he nevertheless had in extraordinary degree two things which Mahler eminently lacked--inventive genius and a giant peasant strength. He was able to cope vigorously with the gigantic programs he set for himself. At moments, no doubt, as in the C-minor Symphony and so many of his piano-sonatas, one is repelled by a certain indefinable pompousness and self-righteousness and exasperated by the obviousness and dullness and heaviness of his art. The finale of the Ninth Symphony with its blare and crash, its chorus screaming on high C, its Turkish March with cymbals and bass-drum, is not entirely inspired, most folk will agree. And yet, for all his shortcomings, the wonders of Beethoven are innumerable. There are the many quartets with their masterly invention and composition, the First and Sixth Symphonies with their immortal youth and freshness, their hearty strength and simplicity, the deeply beautiful passages and movements to be found in nearly every one of his works. There is all the wonderful solidity that Mahler, for instance, never achieved. For in poor Mahler's work we feel only the intention, rarely the achievement. We feel him agonizedly straining, pushing and laboring, trying to manufacture his banal thematic material into music by the application of all the little contrapuntal formulas. We find him relying finally upon physical apparatus, upon sheer brute force. His symphonies abound in senseless repetitions, in all sorts of eye-music. And in the Eighth Symphony, the apotheosis of his reliance on the physical, he calls for a chorus of a thousand men, women and children, and at the end, I believe, the descent of the Holy Ghost. But the ultimate effect is exactly the reverse of what Mahler planned. The very size of the apparatus throws into crudest relief his weariness and uncreativity. For a moment, a work like the Eighth Symphony stuns the auditor with its sheer physical

bulk. After all, one does not hear a thousand voices singing together every day, and the brass and the percussion are very brilliant. Soon, nevertheless, there insinuates itself the realization that there is in this work neither the all-creating spirit the composer so magniloquently invokes, nor the heaven he strives so ardently to attain. They are in the music of a score of other composers. For these men had lived. And it was to real life that Mahler never attained.

If his music expresses anything at all, it expresses just the characteristics that Mahler was most anxious to have it conceal. Life is the greatest of practical jokers, and Mahler, in seeking to escape his racial traits, ended by representing nothing so much as the Jew. For if there is anything visible behind the music of Mahler, it is the Jew as Wagner, say, describes him in "Das Judentum in der Musik," the Jew who through the superficial assimilation of the traits of the people among whom he is condemned to live, and through the suppression of his own nature, becomes sterile. It is the Jew consumed by malaise and homesickness, by impotent yearning for the terrain which will permit him free expression, and which he conceives as an otherwheres, or as a dream-Palestine. It is the Jew unable to feel faith or joy or content because he is unable to live out his own life. It is the Jew consumed by bitterness because he is perpetually untrue to himself. It is the Jew afraid to die because he has never really lived himself out. It is the Jew as he is when he wants most to cease being a Jew. Mahler could have seemed no more the Jew had he expressed himself in all his Hebraic fervor instead of singing about Saint Peter in Heaven and seeking to reconcile Rhabanus Maurus and Goethe in a "higher synthesis." Only, it would have been good music instead of a nondescript and mongrel thing that he composed. All that he really attained by hampering himself was sterility.

And, in the end, we are forced to conclude that it was not solely the environment, however much that favored it, that condemned Mahler to sterility. Did we have no example of a Jewish musician attaining creativity through the frank expression of his Semitic characteristics, we might presume that no choice existed for Mahler, and that it is inevitable that the Jew, whenever he essays the grand style, becomes just what Wagner called him in his brilliant and brutal pamphlet, a pretender. But, fortunately, such an example does exist. Geneva, "la ville Protestante," that saw unclothe the art of Ernest Bloch, was, after all, not much more eager to welcome a Jewish renaissance than was the Vienna of Gustav Mahler. But some inner might that the elder man lacked gave the young Genevese composer the courage to speak out, and to attain salvation. It was, after all, a sort of intelligence, a sense of reality, a real overwhelming spiritual strength that Mahler lacked. For all his immense capacities, he was a weak man. He permitted his environment to ruin him.

CHARACTERIZATION VS. SITUATION

by ANNIE NATHAN MEYER.

THE DRAMA

A Quarterly Review Devoted to the Play and the Theatre

February, 1918

<http://www.archive.org/details/dramamagazin191808dramuoft>

THE well-known playwright, Hartley Manners [wrote Peg O'My Heart for wife Laurette Taylor], has just declared that the development of character is the only real problem for the dramatist, and that a play cannot be said to be formless which successfully portrays the human beings it sets before us.

"The only real form I feel disposed to recognize in writing for the theatre," he says, "is the consistent development of character. Let situation take care of itself. Character makes situation."

More and more I think this point of view has come to be representative of the most sincere playwrights. But obviously it is not one to which the manager will readily subscribe. Not because the manager may not be sufficiently enlightened to realize that the truest action may be internal an invisible struggle between clashing wills rather than a visible fight between clashing bodies but because once granted that characterization is of crucial importance, the manager will have to treat the text of a play with far greater respect and consideration than up to the present moment he has been inclined to do. To speak to the actor of "types," is to make him see red, but though I say it with fear in my heart, I really believe that many plays have been misinterpreted by a lack of the proper "types." I have all due respect for the art of miming which permits one temperament to simulate another, I appreciate the wizardry of a clever make-up, but obviously there are limits beyond which one cannot go without distorting the author's meaning. I hold no brief for the theory that one's appearance off the stage should be the sole or even the most important test for the doling out of parts. I am perfectly willing that the test should be applied only to one's appearance on the stage ; nevertheless, while

our modern audiences are more sensitive to the realistic atmosphere of a play than to the declamation of sonorous soliloquies, the sense of reality that an actor is able to impart to a characterization is of fundamental and constantly growing importance. To remind me that Conway Tearle is not always the fascinating lover, but was admirably real as that tough citizen, Bill Walker, in *Major Barbara*, to remind me that Sarah Bernhardt, an old and crippled woman, can brilliantly portray a youthful soldier, that O. P. Heggie is equally delightful as a bored young millionaire, a plodding old clerk, or a gentle martyr of the early Christian church, is quite beside the mark, for these did fully succeed in creating on the stage the desired impression. That is all that I ask. We must, of course, safeguard the tradition of the art of acting ; we must ridicule out of court the manager who is of so inelastic a mind as to hold that red hair and freckles, in order to "get across," must be a matter of roots and pigment. He should hold seriously and courageously to a faith that the characters that have been painfully and conscientiously evolved by the playwright, must interpret the author's intentions both spiritually and outwardly. The test of an orchestral performance is the smooth and beautiful rendering of the ideas of the composer, and to give a smooth and beautiful rendering of the ideas of the playwright is, or should be, the test of a stage production. I need scarcely say that I do not seriously object to Miss Barrymore's blonde wig in the latest though who shall say the last ? revival of *La Dame aux Camelias*, notwithstanding Dumas' description of Marguerite's black curls, nor am I greatly disturbed by the raven locks of Mr. Tearle in the place of the blonde hair bestowed on Armande by his creator, but I have in mind certain recently produced plays the meaning of which has been utterly distorted by the managerial tendency to cast an eye upon the drawing powers of a star, instead of on the sincere interpretation of the play. How different is the case of the other arts! We shudder as we recall that Rembrandt's *Night Watch* was cut to make it fit into a certain space in the *Burghers' Hall*. We would probably rain protests upon the daring conductor who would play as presto the adagio even of a living composer who is not a classic. The integrity of a musical composition, a picture, or a statue is well recognized. In the case of even so much discussed and villified a piece of sculpture as Bar-

nard's Lincoln, it is quite understood that it is to be taken "as is," or not at all. No one, so far as I know, has suggested that the hands be forcibly removed from the pit of the stomach, or that a Roman toga be thrown carelessly over the shoulders, not by the sculptor, mind you, but by someone else who not by birth, by association, or by culture may be supposed to enter into the spirit of the creator. Now, while the immediate cause of this outburst is the production in New York of a highly successful play, Why Marry f by Jesse Lynch Williams, nevertheless, I have long nursed within me an indignant protest that the clear intention of the playwright is so often ignored. Take the case of one of our great American plays, The Great Divide, by William Moody, a distinguished poet who, if anyone could, would have spoken to the managerial ear with authority. I saw its first production in New York with Mr. Henry Miller as Ghent and Miss Margaret Anglin as Ruth Jordan. I saw it some years later, with Ghent acted again by Mr. Miller, and Euth Jordan acted by Miss Gladys Hanson, a more beautiful and less mature woman than Miss Anglin, but neither actress remotely approached the young heroine imagined by Mr. Moody. An admirer of Mr. Moody's verse, and his other play, The Faith Healer, nevertheless I had always resented the high position which the judgment of the best critics had given to The Great Divide. The motivation, from the heroine's offer of marriage to her dislike of her offspring, seemed to me poor and inconclusive; moreover, her failure to "play the game," her sullenness, above all her utterly abnormal (or shall I say sub-normal?) horror of the marital relation, her passionate reproach to her husband for not dwelling longer in Platonic companionship (even while she admitted the beauty and chivalry of his conduct, admitted, too, that Time was drawing them swiftly together), frankly disgusted me. Miss Anglin made her simply a disagreeable, nagging woman, Miss Hanson softened my irritation by so much as an entrancing exterior could, but neither gave me the slightest clue as to what the author really intended. Remember, he had not drawn an ordinary New England spinster. At the rising of the curtain she refused the hand of a cultured gentleman from the eastern states because he was "too finished" a product. Everything, her love of the West, its wild scenery, its wilder men, was calculated to show she was anything but the Puritan

with sluggish, anaemic blood creeping through her veins. One moment she was painted as poetic, temperamental, imaginative, brave, fine and true, flying straight as an arrow to the heart of her mate, the next literal, implacable, unimaginative, cowardly, untrue and resentful. Moreover, what could be a falser note so I reasoned than her indifference to her own baby, if we were to accept the final curtain that she had always recognized in Ghent her true lover and sought-for mate? Whether her pride rebelled or not, the child was flesh and bone of the man she loved, and she inevitably would have poured all her poor wronged affection on her offspring hers and his.

And what was the motive that made her choose Ghent of the three men as they stood there coveting her body? As played by Mr. Miller (with his wide-brimmed hat well over his face, you remember, and well in the shadow so that his age would not tell too heavily against him) it certainly looked as if Ruth went for protection to the larger, more powerful or at least fatter of the men. Not a glimpse was there of the poetic idea that, notwithstanding all the horror and the terror, the young thing had recognized her own true mate, not a suggestion that under it all heart spoke to heart. No, for the author had set it down "Ghent is younger than Dutch, and taller, but less powerfully built," so it was something else than brute strength that caused Ruth, little Ruth, poor, distracted child, to give herself to the one for life, trusting him to keep his bargain.

"Little Ruth, poor, distracted child!" Does this seem rather inappropriate language to apply to either of the mature women who acted the part? But the author says plainly: "Ruth Jordan, a girl of nineteen, stands at the window looking out. "

Now, I have always held that no play can be known solely by its stage production, any more than it can be realized solely through its publication, unless the stage production given it is perfect in its attunement to the spirit and intent of the author. Therefore, I have always maintained that one should not reach a definite conclusion about a play until one has both read it and seen it acted. One's final judgment depends not so much upon whether one first sees it or reads it, as upon the emphasis one chooses to place upon plot or acting. I have frequently had occasion

to point out the fact that being familiar with the plot of a play places one's interest upon its rendition. The comparative unfamiliarity of the average American audience with the printed drama is one of the basic causes for the careless, incomplete, stage productions that many of our playwrights have to submit to or go unproduced. I confess I was skeptical of great results from reading *The Great Divide* after having twice seen it performed. And yet on the very first page I came across this description of Ruth Jordan as a young girl of nineteen, as by magic shedding a light on the entire play, changing it in my eyes from a most uneven, uncertainly and poorly motivated piece of work to that play which combines, more than any other work of an American dramatist, a serious interpretation of life, treated with poetic imagination and joined to a tense dramatic situation.

Do I exaggerate the potency of the printed version? I think not, for it is obvious to the most unthinking that the reactions of a romantically inclined child of nineteen are very different from those of a mature woman, and all the indecisions, the suppressed tendernesses, the gusts of exaggerated horror, the absence of poise and understanding which repelled me in the one, I found perfectly natural, indeed touchingly pathetic in the other. Also the rash adventure of the intoxicated Ghent takes on quite other proportions when one reflects that it was the action not of a mature man of forty, but of a wild and careless youth whose character was still in the making.

This to me is perhaps the most flagrant example of the exigencies of histrionic egoism (or it may have been mere managerial confidence in the stellar system) which destroyed the true values of a great and beautiful play. Truly, here indeed was a case which proved the truth of Mr. Manners' dictum, * ' Character makes situation. ' '

And so we come to *Why Marry?* that brilliant comedy by Mr. Jesse Lynch Williams, which is now being performed in New York with a company which in cruder days would have been announced as an ' ' all-star cast," every one of whom is admirable except for the fact that four of them bear not the slightest resemblance to anything the author ever intended

them to be. No wonder Mr. Williams has just indulged in a highly indiscreet interview in which he declares himself by no means won over to being a playwright! He admits:

"The disappointments are far keener when you write a play. You have built up a character, endowing it with flesh and blood, and then when you see the poor distorted creature wandering out there before your eyes, you wonder how it could have happened."

We have long heard the wail of the unproduced playwright. This, you see, is a cry from the heart of the produced, successful playwright. The first instance of miscasting in *Why Marry?* is Miss Beatrice Beckley as Lucy, John's wife, who is supposed to epitomize the evils of the old-fashioned union. When one recalls that Miss Beckley made an admirable Vivie Warren in last year's revival of Mrs. Warren's Profession, that she was again admirably cast as the very up-to-date woman physician in Eugene Walter's *The Knife*, it is not difficult to imagine that she is not happy in the part of Mrs. John. It is no criticism of her art to say that her large masculine frame and height, her assertiveness, her deep voice and precise enunciation, highly characteristic as they are of her own personality, do not lend themselves readily to the interpretation of a timorous echo of her husband's wishes. The part of the more intrepid Jean was taken by a mere strip of a girl, and had the audience been permitted to read Mr. Williams' description of the two women, it would certainly have been amused to think that Lucy was supposed to be a great contrast to Jean's "more modern, less delicate" charm; furthermore, that "Jean is frank and brave, Lucy indirect and timid, pretty but fading, forty but fighting it." But these two instances of the ignoring of an author's conception are slight in significance compared to the crucial mischaracterizations of the hero and heroine. To put it bluntly: did Mr. Williams write an amusing, light, very light, comedy as a "vehicle" hateful term for two attractive young matinee idols, or did he put his finger on a real difficulty of modern economic conditions the postponement of marriage until middle age has secured a competence and interpret it in terms of the drama, incidentally, by the way, shedding a highly illuminative light upon such accessory questions as the economic independence of the married

woman, the training of young girls to be self-supporting, the pecuniary reward of scientists and clergymen, and the problem of divorce thrown in for good measure!

The heroine "Helen, a more or less new woman," as the author describes her, is impersonated by Miss Estelle Winwood, one of the sweetest, daintiest young actresses on the stage, a veritable sylph, with a soft little voice with a wonderfully appealing note in it, and yet the author (who, come to think on it, ought to know) describes her as "a beautiful woman of twenty-nine, tall, strong, glorious plenty of old-fashioned charm, despite her new-fashioned ideas." Now, charming as Miss Winwood undoubtedly is, a rarely appealing figure, nevertheless she is just as much like a college graduate of nearly thirty who has been conducting difficult research work at a scientific institute, as a fine Arabian charger is like a dray horse. Far be it from me to deny that a laboratory assistant may be beautiful; far be it from my purpose to assert, notwithstanding the dictum of George Eliot, that a rare and brilliant scientific ability cannot be coupled with personal charm, yet not even her most ardent admirer would think of describing Miss Winwood as a tall, glorious creature! Moreover it does tax the credulity to imagine her with one eye screwed into the nozzle of a microscope! I assure you to hear her, suddenly in the course of her pretended love-making, give utterance to the terrible words, "anterior poliomyelitis," was quite as much a shock to the audience as to her listeners on the stage. After all, it is a well-known axiom that in art it is not the truth that is so important as the appearance of truth. To be exact means little; to be convincing, everything. We as an audience scarcely concern ourselves with the question if any young physician who has inoculated himself for yellow fever, and devoted the rest of his days to the pursuit of the germ of anterior poliomyelitis, can possibly be as good-looking as Shelley Hull, or with the problem whether any laboratory assistant could possibly look as thoroughly delectable as Estelle Winwood, but we do ask, and have every right to ask, do these two give vraisemblance to the scene? Do they really put before us the throbbing, vital problem that we see on all sides about us in real life? Does the heroine make us feel she is really the big-hearted, intellectual, but thoroughly human, girl who

will sacrifice convention rather than lose her lover, or see him lose himself? I think the answer must be in the negative.

Obviously the manager has played safe. He is not at all sure that the theatregoing public is interested in the problem of the postponed marriage, or the economic independence of married women, but he is quite, quite sure that it, or rather she, is interested in seeing that handsome young actor, Shelley Hull, make love so divinely. Did you ever hear anyone say "I love you" more thrillingly? And the "average sensual man" may not take very seriously a young woman worker who wants neither to give up her professional career nor to ruin that of her lover, but he cannot fail to be interested in the woes and tribulations of so pretty and winsome a creature as Estelle Winwood. One cannot but regret that Mr. Williams did not possess the authority and determination of Mr. Bernard Shaw, who would have seen to it that Mr. Manager would have cast the play so that the characters, each and every one, lived and had their being as their creator had intended them.

It seems almost ungracious to cavil at a cast which contains two such admirable characterizations as the judge, played by the irrepressible Nat Goodwin, and the clergyman, exquisitely interpreted by that rare and dignified artist, Ernest Lawford. Yet, I cannot but feel that much that is fine and true in the play, much that lifts it above the average run of plays, will inevitably escape us in the present production. The character of Helen is really a very beautiful one. It would be a mistake, notwithstanding the author's warning that she "does not believe in marriage," to mistake her for one of these most unpleasant young women who parade in strange costumes and stranger attitudes, in their search for "self-expression," whatever that really is. She is quite a different type from the heroine of the Danish Why Marry? Karen, now on the boards. Helen is warm, affectionate, and quite old fashioned enough to love babies and think no marriage complete without them; moreover, she unhesitatingly yields her career as secondary to that of her husband. There is nothing at all about her of the rebellious anarchist, and the criticism that I have heard aimed at the amusing and unexpected denouement is quite unfair, for she had really never rebelled at marriage in itself, but merely marriage

if it meant a burden to the man whom she loved, and whose future she did not intend to ruin. Since Brother John raised the young man's salary to a very livable amount, she had certainly no objections to the marriage ceremony's being performed. And speaking of the question of salary, it seems a pity that Mr. Williams felt it incumbent upon him to play with loaded dice. I can assure him that three thousand dollars is not quite the usual salary of * * scientists, college professors and that sort of thing"- I understood that the city of New York was implied nor, on the other hand, is it at all usual for even the most successful of practitioners to make a million! But while in some instances I long for the superb fairness and sportsmanship of Galsworthy, nevertheless Mr. Williams has written a play which, for all its light-hearted fun, its epigram and sparkle, makes us face frankly a very real problem that not only confronts us now, but which is bound to become increasingly urgent as the full toll of the war is taken. We simply cannot go on for long permitting our youth to remain celibates, nor can we permit them to marry with a fixed determination to avoid having children. We may as well resign ourselves to seeing welcomed some of the more radical ideas concerning marriage and motherhood which only a few years ago would have been shooed off the scene.

THE BALLET IN ITS DARK AGE

from The Project Gutenberg EBook of **The Dance Its Place in Art and Life**, by
Troy Kinney and Margaret West Kinney

When a plant has passed a climax of luxuriant blossoming, a heedless owner is likely to leave it to the mercies of weather and worms, while he turns his interest to other plants whose season of bloom is just beginning.

Taglioni and Ellsler faded about the middle of the nineteenth century. Cerito, Grahn and Grisi were, at best, unable to surpass them. Jenny Lind set people talking about singers, and spending their time listening to songs. Dancers, desperately straining to recatch the lost interest, multiplied _entrechats_ and _pirouettes_, jumped higher and more bravely than ever. Straining for technical feats, they forgot motive; the public called the ballet meaningless, its work a stupid form of acrobatics, its smile a grimace. A genius could have made such words seem the words of fools; in the default of a genius, the words were accepted as of more or less true judgment.

The years that followed produced a certain amount of dancing that was good, notably some of the operatic ballets of Europe, and a few ballet spectacles of the seventies and eighties; more that could not exactly be called bad; and, lastly and principally, a series of monstrosities that were nearly infinite in both number and ugliness.

In trying to find something that would suit the new and unsettled state of the public taste, managers apparently tried any concoction that could be devised by stage, paint-bridge, property room or box-office. Montmartre dance-halls evolved the _Can-can_; half of Paris caught its fever; England, and thence America, were engulfed in the lingerie of high kickers. Not dancers, just high kickers.

“One, two, three, KICK!” was their vocabulary--or is, for they are not all dead yet.

In England several managers at various times offered good productions, with casts of capable artists. Of such productions the most fortunate made small profits; the majority lost whatever money was put into them. Managers said the public did not want good work--a deduction apparently justifiable. They devised the elaborate scenic production--Aladdin's-cave sort of thing, with millions of jewels the size of roc's eggs, delirious with yards and furlongs of red, yellow and green foil-paper, acres of chrome-yellow, and “magic transformation scenes”; with one hundred people on the stage, one hundred, obviously making two hundred legs, every one of which was considered thrilling and dangerous in those days.

Of all those legs displayed in all their amplitude, usually not one pair could dance a step; but they did not need to dance.

That was the form of art called the extravaganza. It was a naughty thing to patronise. Its inanities, without its “stupendous” cost of production, survive in the present-day burlesque.

In the morbid conditions of Montmartre there came into favour a species of acrobats whose aim was to produce the illusion that their legs and spines were out of joint, if not broken. Although of an ugliness demoniac, their work was called dancing. “Wiry Sal” in England and “Ruth the Twister” in America were the illuminating pseudonyms associated with the specialty. Perhaps a specimen of the kind might still be unearthed in a dime museum.

Enter Lottie Collins, she of “ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay.” To high kicking and contortion, and the Skirt Dance vogue of the moment, she added action so violent that it seemed a menace to life itself. The combination of attractions was irresistible; Europe and America made her rich. Her master-stroke was bending back until her body was horizontal, and violently straightening up to emphasise the “boom” of her song. For no less than a dancer she was a singer! The two talents were employed together. And hordes of little plagiarists of her act, as of every other “hit,” brought delight to the many and despair to the few.

Lottie Collinsism left no territory to be explored in its direction. So an eager world turned to the inanity of sweetness.

The dear little girl had been discovered. Evil among days! Preferably she was dimpled. She wore a blond wig with curls falling artlessly over her shoulders. Her eyebrows were painted in a smoothly curved arch extending around on to the sides of her face, and her eyes were shaded with the luxuriant lashes begot of heavy “beading”; they, too, were carried out an indefinite distance to the sides. She dressed as a child of twelve, with a sash that conveyed the idea of being dressed for Sunday-school; imagination always supplied a cent gripped in her fist. She wore “cunning” little low-heeled shoes, with straps. It was not amiss that she have some sort of sunbonnet, of lace, slipped carelessly off her flaxen head and hanging down her back. Rouge, with a bloom of rice powder, gave her a perfect peaches-and-cream complexion. Grease paint widened and shortened her lips, curved them into an infantile cupid’s bow. And from that cupid’s bow emerged, in piercing calliope tones, inflectionless recitals of her devotion to her dear old mother. At the end of each stanza she had a little dance--usually a slow polka-step, one, two, three and kick! (An irreproachably discreet little kick, to the side.) Repeat four times each side, and on to the next stanza--which instead of “mother” and “other,” will avail itself of the felicitous rhyme of “roam” and “home,” or “heart” and “part.”

Lest the enumeration of the foregoing horrors should be criticised as out of place in a discussion of dancing, be it recorded at this point that the said horrors went under the name of dancing within easy remembrance of people now living, that there are still people living who call them dancing, and--for artistic sins of the world as yet unexpiated--they still influence the dancing situation in these United States.

The Black Crook is a name that stands for superlatives. It was the most lavish spectacle America ever had seen. It made such a "hit" as rarely has been duplicated since. Its dancing features, which were of the first order, made more of an impression than had any dancing in this country since Ellsler's tour, in 1840, '41 and '42. Its origin was in part due to the sometimes favourable factor of accident.

"In consequence of the destruction by fire of the Academy of Music, this city," writes J. Allston Brown in his History of the New York Stage, "Jarrett and Palmer, who were to have produced La Biche au Bois there, had on their hands a number of artists brought from Europe. They made an arrangement with William Wheatley to utilise the ballet troupe, the chief scenic effects, of which they had models, and the transformation scene." From those beginnings grew The Black Crook. With Marie Bonfanti, Rita Sangalli, Betty Rigl and Rose Delval as principal dancers, it opened at Niblo's Garden in September, 1866. The run closed in January, 1868, after 475 performances. A return to Niblo's in December, 1870, yielded 122 performances. December of the following year added 57 to the score. A revival in August, 1872, brought into the company the Kiralfy family, dancers, among whom were the brothers destined to fame as managers and producers. This 1872 revival ran twelve weeks. In 1874, Kiralfy Brothers appear as lessees of the Grand Opera House. They initiated their term with The Black Crook, with Bonfanti as première.

Of American appreciation of good dancing pantomime, during that period, at least, there is no question. It must be borne in mind that the New York performances above mentioned represent only a fraction of the production's total business. The tours that largely occupied the intervals met the same success. The box-office measure of public enthusiasm is incomplete, moreover, without mention of Humpty Dumpty, also a spectacular pantomime with good dancing. Of its first run (in New York, and largely coinciding with the first run of The Black Crook in point of time) the gross receipts were \$1,406,000. It was commensurately profitable as a "road" attraction. Pertinent to the quality of its dancing, we have a few words of its manager, Clifton W. Tayleure, as quoted by Brown: "... principal dancers were not easily to be found. A quarrel between Vestvalli and Sangalli enabled me to secure the latter. Betty and Emily Rigl, who had previously seceded from Niblo's, were also secured."

Notwithstanding desertions, The Black Crook maintained its high standards. Its ballet has never since been equalled in America, according to Mme. Bonfanti, in the classic style of work.

For its managers, at least, dancing had earned fortunes. To the Kiralfys it was evident, too, that the kind of dancing America wanted was good dancing. To produce their Excelsior in 1882 they brought from Paris Sr. Ettore Coppini, now ballet-master of the Metropolitan Opera; and George Saracco, now ballet-master of the Brussels Opera, as a leading dancer. Nor did Jarrett and Palmer modify their faith in quality. Their White Fawn, with an excellent ballet, was little less successful than The Black Crook.

The fame of such works is food for parasites; creatures incapable of discerning the quality of successful works, and upon whom the goodness of the successful dancing had made no impression. Black Crook and White Fawn companies overran the country like a flood of counterfeit money--one part fine, ninety-nine parts base. Plausible advertising protected the deception, but only for a time. It was not long before lovers of good dancing began to realise that they were being defrauded.

In a similar contingency, the supporting public of a baseball club loses no time in applying to that club's manager whatever pressure may be necessary as a means to correcting shortcomings, as far as within him lies. The source of their ability to do this is twofold: they can analyse the game, and they have a vocabulary in which to express themselves. Baseball had not so many enthusiasts in those days as dancing had. But the appreciators of dancing lacked analytical knowledge of the art, and the language in which to discuss it. Promoters of counterfeits were not taken to task, therefore, as would have been to their own good. Instead, the names of Black Crook, White Fawn, dancing and pantomime became synonyms for theatrical imposition, and America laid aside interest in them and all their appurtenances.

Of all the consequences of the above incidents, perhaps the most unfortunate was a generally accepted managerial deduction that America does not like dancing after all. Though the Russian ballet has shaken that belief, the belief is not dead yet.

There is a saying that no man is indispensable; that, after his removal, there is always another to take his place. The saying is not true.

Pantomime--not dancing to be sure, but so closely related to it that the prosperity of either usually means that of both--at one time had the alliance of Augustin Daly. He believed in it as a great art, and contemplated increasingly ambitious productions. To those closely associated with him he declared himself willing to lose money on it for three years, and more if necessary; he was confident that eventually it

would attain to great popularity in this country. But after producing _L'Enfant Prodigue_ and _Pygmalion and Galatea_, death stepped in and took away from the stage one of the best influences it ever had, and from dancing a possible friendship of the kind it sorely needed.

In the eighties there was in Chicago a child who had considerable fame as a temperance lecturer. Her name was Loie Fuller. She was moved to take dancing lessons; but (according to biographers) gave them up after a few lessons, on account of difficulty. After a certain amount of voice culture, she qualified as an actress with a singing part. During an engagement in this capacity she received, from a friend in India, a present of a long scarf of extremely thin silk. While playing with it, delighting in its power to float in the air almost like a vapour, Miss Fuller received the idea that was to bring her before the world, the _Serpentine Dance_. The dance was there in its essence, needing only arrangement and polish, and surety of keeping a great volume of cloth afloat without entanglement. Steps were of no consequence, nor quality of movement in arms or body. The cloth was the thing, and Miss Fuller lost no time on non-essentials.

The success of the _Serpentine_ was not one of those victories gained after long experimenting for a perfect expression, patiently educating the public, and years of disappointments. It was instantaneous and complete; a few weeks sufficed to make Loie Fuller a national figure. A period of tremendous popularity followed, popularity amounting to a fashion. And still another impulse was to come, second only in importance to the use of the gauze itself.

In Paris Miss Fuller had a sketch in which she, a solitary figure, stood on a height at dawn, silhouetted against the sky. The rising sun was arranged to illuminate, one after another, the prominences in the landscape falling away into the distance. The figure, on being touched by the rays, represented its awakening by the fluttering, raising and full play of its hundred yards or so of drapery.

It happened that an audience mistook the intent of the effect, and greeted it as a dance of fire. The upward rush of the cloth, obviously, had suggested flame. "La Loïe" lost not a moment in seeing the possibilities, nor an hour in setting to work on their development. Stage electric lighting was new; so new that it acknowledged no limitations. Electricians were enthusiastic over new problems, because new problems were being solved by new and sometimes sensational inventions. To lighting Miss Fuller turned to make the effect of the fire dance unmistakable and startling. With the result that the colours and movement of flame were almost counterfeited. Various coloured glasses lent their tints to the rays of spot lights; set into discs made to revolve in front of the lamp, they simulated the upward rush that helps make flame exciting. As a precaution against theft of ideas, the essential parts of the electric arrangements are said to have been

trusted exclusively to Miss Fuller's brothers.

La Danse de Feu, consistently prepared as such, created an enthusiasm in Paris probably equal to the "hit" of the Serpentine in America. Indeed Miss Fuller was practically adopted into the French nation, where she was affectionately and widely known as "La Loïe." French is the language in which she wrote her memoirs. (Mes Mémoires, Loie Fuller.)

Her work, always startling, never failed of being agreeable also. By a loose application of the word it was justified in being called dancing. Strictly speaking it was not, from the point of view of step, movement or posture. Interest in steps the work frankly disclaimed by its own terms; an easy movement from place to place, with reference always to the drapery, was all that was undertaken in the department of foot-work. The arms were equally subordinated to the drapery; their movements, as interpretation or decoration, meant nothing. The performer held in each hand a short pole as aid to manipulation of the cloth, in which her arms were buried most of the time. They committed no awkwardness, nor did they contribute to the effect except as they furnished motive power. As to the drapery, any idea of making it a vehicle of controlled lines would obviously have been out of the question. Colour without form was the result; and form, when all is said and done, is the essence not only of dancing, but of any art that would attempt to convey a message to the senses as well as pleasure to the eye.

Imitators affected Miss Fuller very little. So closely were her means guarded--it is said that no one of her designers and sewing-women knew more than a part of the construction of her draperies--that attempts to reproduce her work were generally laborious compromises with failure. But the musical comedy stage underwent an inundation of illuminated dry-goods. With the mechanical problem simplified by the distribution of the hundred yards of drapery among forty people, there followed a sea of cavorting rainbows and prisms that lacked even a semi-careful selection of colours.

The World's Fair in Chicago brought to America a variety of dancers, most of them good. The novelty element was the work of the Orient. The Oriental point of view differs from that of England and America; it accepts as natural the existence of sex. In all its expressions, whether literary, sculptural, pictorial, or choreographic, the subject of sex is neither avoided nor emphasised. It takes its place among the actuating dramatic motives exactly as it has done in the expressions of all civilisations of all times, except those of our Anglo-Saxon civilisation since about 1620, in which it is evaded, and of certain decadent civilisations, where it is an obsession.

The World's Fair crowd was so amazed by the Oriental disregard of Puritan tradition that it could see nothing in dances of India and North Africa except obscenity. Instead of trying to acquaint the public with

the wealth of poetic symbolism of the dances, and their unlimited scope of meaning, every manager on the Midway at once adopted the motto of the majority of his profession: "Give the public what it wants." That at least is the inference from conditions. Before the fair was a month old there was hardly an Oriental dancing attraction on the grounds that did not claim, in the sly-dog language of naughty suggestion, to surpass all competitors in lewdness. And it verily seemed as though most of them were justified in their claims.

They all made money. And they created against Oriental dancing a prejudice just beginning to melt now at the end of twenty years; the majority of the public is still convinced that no Oriental dancing is anything but a pretext for offensiveness. For any physical quality truly is offensive the moment it is unduly insisted upon. And with few exceptions the managers of the unhappy Arabs dancing in this country have inspired their charges to exaggerate one quality to the almost complete exclusion of every other one.

The ghastly reaction of such a state of affairs is on dancing in general. In this present year, 1913, one of the most prominent and successful managers in America said: "There are two ways to succeed with dancers. If they have a sensational acrobatic novelty that never has been seen before, _that_ will make money. Otherwise you've got to take their clothes off, if you want anybody to look at 'em. Duncan? St. Denis? What does the American public care about art? They have succeeded because they took their clothes off."

It sounds unreal, it is so demonstrably silly. But it was what that manager said. In his profession there are several who hold contrary beliefs; but the one quoted is of the opinion common among the present custodians of the dancing art in America. In their offices is determined what character of dancing shall occupy the stage; to their beliefs the lover of good dancing must give heed.

Any refutation of the above cynicism as affecting Miss Duncan and Miss St. Denis is superfluous. Their work has at all times been charged with a big, romantic or mystic meaning. Imitators, basing their activities on the manager's creed above quoted, have furnished an illuminating experiment to determine exactly what interest the public finds in the work of the two artists named. Invariable failure has accompanied their approximate nudity, despite the fact that many of them are pretty in face and figure.

Great dancers have come, been seen, but--until the coming of the Russians--have achieved few victories of lasting value. Genée is an exception; to delight in her work is to be added a real influence in favour of real art. Carmencita, Otero and Rosario Guerrero, all great artists of expression conveyed through the medium of the dances of Spain, have had good seasons in this country. Even though their

influence on taste did not seem far-reaching, it must be believed that they helped prepare the way for great things that were to come.

But the real force of the coming change, the change that was to take its place among the important revolutions in the history of all art was quietly preparing itself in an American village.

THE VILLAGE TALE

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During the decade following the year 1848 _genre_ painting in Germany threw off the shackles of the anecdotic style, and continued a development similar to that of history, which, in the same country, flourished long after it was moribund elsewhere. After the elder artists, who showed so much zeal in producing perfectly ineffective little pictures, executed with incredible pains and a desperate veracity of detail, there followed, from 1850, a generation who were technically better equipped. They no longer confined themselves to making tentative efforts in the manner of the old masters, but either borrowed their lights directly from the historical painters in Paris, or were indirectly made familiar with the results of French technique through Piloty. Subjects of greater refinement were united with a treatment of colour which was less offensive.

The childlike innocence which had given pleasure in Meyerheim and Waldmüller was now thought to be too childlike by far. The merriment which radiated from the pictures of Schroedter or Enhuber found no echo amidst a generation which was tired of such cheap humour: the works of Carl Hübner were put aside as lachrymose and sentimental efforts. When the world had issued from the period of Romanticism there was no temptation to be funny over modern life nor to make socialistic propaganda; for after the Revolution of 1848 people had become reconciled to the changed order of affairs and to life as it actually was--its cares and its worries, its mistakes and its sins. It was the time when Berthold Auerbach's village tales ran through so many editions; and, hand in hand with these literary productions, painting also set itself to tell little stories from the life of sundry classes of the people, amongst which rustics were always the most preferable from their picturesqueness of costume.

At the head of this group of artists stands _Louis Knaus_, and if it is difficult to hymn his praises at the present day, that is chiefly because Knaus mostly drew upon that sarcastic and ironical characteristic which is such an unpleasant moral note in the pictures of Hogarth, Schroedter, and Madou. The figures of the old Dutch masters behave as if the glance of no stranger were resting upon them: it is possible to share their joys and sorrows, which are not merely acted. We feel at our ease with them because they regard us as one of themselves. In Knaus there is always an artificial bond between the figures and the frequenters of the exhibition. They plunge into the greatest extravagances to excite attention, tickle the spectator to make him laugh, or cry out to move him to tears. With the exception of Wilkie, no

genre painter has explained his purpose more obtrusively or in greater detail. Even when he paints a portrait, by way of variation, he stands behind with a pointer to explain it. On this account the portraits of Mommsen and Helmholtz in the Berlin National Gallery are made too official. Each of them is visibly conscious that he is being painted for the National Gallery, and by emphasis and the accumulation of external characteristics Knaus took the greatest pains to lift these personalities into types of the nineteenth-century scholar.

[Illustration: L. Knaus.]

Since popular opinion is wont to represent the philologist as one careless of outward appearance, and the investigator of natural philosophy as an elegant man of the world,--Mommsen must wear boots which have seen much service, and those of Helmholtz must be of polished leather; the shirt of the one must be genially rumpled, and that of the other must fit him to perfection. By such obvious characterisation the Sunday public was satisfied, but those who were represented were really deprived of character. It is not to be supposed that in Mommsen's room the manuscripts of all his principal works would lie so openly upon the writing-table and beneath it, so that every one might see them: it is not probable that his famous white locks would flutter so as he sat at the writing-table. Even the momentary gesture of the hand has in both pictures something obtrusively demonstrative. "Behold, with this pen I have written the history of Rome," says Mommsen. "Behold, there is the famous ophthalmometer which I invented," says Helmholtz.

But as a _genre_ painter Knaus has fallen still more often into such intolerable stage gesticulation. The picture "His Highness upon his Travels" is usually mentioned as that in which he reached his zenith in characterisation. Yet is not this characterisation in the highest degree exaggerated? Is not the expression apportioned to every figure, like parts to a theatrical company, and does not the result seem to be strained beyond all measure? Just look at the children, see how each plays a part to catch your eye. A little girl is leaning shyly on her elder sister, who has bashfully thrust her finger into her mouth: some are looking on with rustic simplicity, others with attention: a child smaller than the others is puckering up its face and crying miserably. The prince, in whose honour the children are drawn up, passes the group with complete indifference, while his companion regards "the people" haughtily through his eyeglass. The schoolmaster bows low, in the hope that his salary may be raised, whilst the stupid churchwarden looks towards the prince with a jovial smile, as though he were awaiting his colleague from the neighbouring village. Of course, they are all very intelligible types; but they are no more than types. For the painter the mere accident of the moment is the source of all life. Would that six-year-old peasant child who stands with the greatest dignity in Knaus's picture as "The Village Prince" have ever stood in that fashion, with a flower between his teeth and his legs thrust apart, unless he had

been carefully taught this self-conscious pose by the painter himself? So that there may not be the slightest doubt as to which of the shoemaker's apprentices is winning and which is losing, one of them has to have a knowing smirk, whilst the other is looking helplessly at his cards. And how that little Maccabee is acting to the public in "The First Profit!" The old man in threadbare clothes, who stands in an ante-chamber rubbing his hands in the picture "I can Wait"; the frightened little girl who sees her bit of bread-and-butter imperilled by geese in "In Great Distress,"--they have all the same deliberate comicality, they are all treated with the same palpable carefulness, the same pointed and impertinently satirical sharpness. Even in "The Funeral" he is not deserted by the humorous proclivity of the anecdotist, and the schoolmaster has to brandish the bâton with which he is conducting the choir of boys and girls as comically as possible. Knaus uses too many italics, and underlines as if he expected his public to be very dull of understanding. In this way he appeals to simple-minded people, and irritates those of more delicate taste. The peasant sits in his pictures like a model; he knows that he must keep quiet, and neither alter his pose nor his grimace, because otherwise Knaus will be angry. All his pictures show signs of the superior and celebrated city gentleman, who has only gone into the country to interest himself in the study of civilisation: there he hunts after effectively comical features, and, having arranged his little world in _tableaux vivants_, he coolly surrenders it to the derision of the cultivated spectator.

[Illustration: KNAUS. IN GREAT DISTRESS.

(_By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co., the owners of the copyright._)]

[Illustration: KNAUS. THE CARD PLAYERS.

(_By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co., the owners of the copyright._)]

But such a judgment, which seems like a condemnation, could not be maintained from the historical standpoint. Germany could not forget Knaus, if it were only for the fact that in the fifties he sided with those who first spread the unusual opinion that painting was incomprehensible without sound ability in the matter of colour. He was not content, like the elder generation, to arrange the individual characters in his pictures in well-disposed groups. He took care to make his works faultless in colouring, so that in the fifties he not only roused the enthusiasm of the great public by his "poetic invention," but made even the Parisian painters enthusiastic by his easy mastery of technique.

To the following effect wrote Edmond About in 1855: "I do not know

whether Herr Knaus has long nails; but even if they were as long as those of Mephistopheles, I should still say that he was an artist to his fingers' ends. His pictures please the Sunday public and the Friday public, the critics, the _bourgeois_, and (God forgive me!) the painters. What is seductive to the great multitude is the clearly expressed dramatic idea, while artists and connoisseurs are won by his knowledge and thorough ability. Herr Knaus has the capacity of satisfying every one. His pictures attract the most incompetent eyes, because they tell pleasant anecdotes; but they likewise fascinate the most jaded by perfect execution of detail. The whole talent of Germany is contained in the person of Herr Knaus. So Germany lives in the Rue de l'Arcade in Paris."

In the fifties all the technical ability which was to be gained from the study of the old Dutch masters and from constant commerce with the modern French reached its highest point in Knaus. Even in his youth the great Netherlandish painters, Ostade, Brouwer, and Teniers, must have had more effect upon him than his teachers, Sohn and Schadow, since his very first pictures, "The Peasants' Dance" of 1850 and "The Card Sharpers" of 1850, had little in common with the Düsseldorf school, and therefore so much the more with the Netherlandish _chiaroscuro_. "The Card Sharpers" is precisely like an Ostade modernised. By his migration to Paris in 1852 he sought to acquire the utmost perfection of finish; and when he returned home, after a sojourn of eight years, he had at his command such a sense for effect and fine harmony of tone, such a knowledge of colour, and such a disciplined and refined taste, that his works indicate an immeasurable advance on the motley harshness of his predecessors. His "Golden Wedding" of 1858--perhaps his finest picture--had nothing of the antiquated technique of the older type of Düsseldorf pictures of peasant life; technically it stood on a level with the works of the French.

[Illustration: KNAUS. THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

(_By permission of Messrs. Goupil & Co., the owners of the copyright._)]

And Knaus has remained the same ever since: a separate personality which belongs to history. He painted peasant pictures of tragic import and rustic gaiety; he recognised a number of graceful traits in child-life, and, having seen a great deal of the world, he made a transition, after he had settled in Berlin, from the character picture of the Black Forest to such as may be painted from the life of cities. He even ventured to touch on religious subjects, and taught the world the limitations of his talent by his "Holy Families," composed out of reminiscences of all times and all schools, and by his "Daniel in the Lions' Den." Knaus is whole-heartedly a _genre_ painter; though that, indeed, is what he has in common with many other people. But thirty years ago he had a genius for colour amid a crowd of narrative and character painters, and this

makes him unique. He is a man whose significance does not merely lie in his talent for narrative, but one who did much for German art. It may be said that in giving the _genre_ picture unsuspected subtleties of colour he helped German art to pass from mere _genre_ painting to painting pure and simple. In this sense he filled an artistic mission, and won for himself in the history of modern painting a firm and sure place, which even the opponent of the illustrative vignette cannot take from him.

[Illustration: _Seemann, Leipzig._

KNAUS. BEHIND THE SCENES.]

Vautier, who must always be named in the same breath with Knaus, is in truth the exact opposite of the Berlin master. He also is essentially a _genre_ painter, and his pictures should not be merely seen but studied in detail; but where Knaus has merits Vautier is defective, and where Knaus is jarring Vautier has merits. In technique he cannot boast of similar qualities. He is always merely a draughtsman who tints, but has never been a colourist. As a painter he has less value, but as a _genre_ painter he is more sympathetic. In the pictures of Knaus one is annoyed by the deliberate smirk, by his exaggerated and heartlessly frigid observation. Vautier gives pleasure by characterisation, more delicately reserved in its adjustment of means, and profound as it is simple, by his wealth of individual motives and their charm, and by the sensitiveness with which he renders the feelings and relationship of his figures. A naïve, good-humoured, and amiable temperament is betrayed in his works. He is genially idyllic where Knaus creates a pungently satirical effect, and a glance at the portraits of the two men explains this difference.

[Illustration: _Kunst für Alle._

BENJAMIN VAUTIER.]

Knaus with his puckered forehead, and his searching look shooting from under heavy brows, is like a judge or a public prosecutor. Vautier, with his thoughtful blue eyes, resembles a prosperous banker with a turn for idealism, or a writer of village tales _à la_ Berthold Auerbach. Knaus worried himself over many things, brooded much and made many experiments; Vautier was content with the acquisition of a plain and simple method of painting, which appeared to him a perfectly sufficient medium for the expression of that which he had realised with profound emotion. The one is a reflective and the other a dreamy nature. Vautier was a man of a happy temperament, one with whom the world went well from his youth upwards, who enjoyed an existence free from care, and who had accustomed himself as a painter to see the world in a rosy light. There is something sound and pure in his characters, in his pictures something peaceful and cordial; it does not, indeed, make his paltry pedantic style of painting any the better, but from the human standpoint it

touches one sympathetically. His countrymen may be ashamed of Vautier as a painter when they come across him amongst aliens in foreign exhibitions, but they rejoice in him none the less as a _genre_ painter. It is as if they had been met by the quiet, faithful gaze of a German eye amid the fiery glances of the Latin nations. It is as if they suddenly heard a simple German song, rendered without training, and yet with a great deal of feeling. A generation ago Knaus could exhibit everywhere as a painter; as such Vautier was only possible in Germany during the sixties. But in Knaus it is impossible to get rid of the impress of the Berlin professor, while from Vautier's pictures there smiles the kindly sentiment of German home-life. Vautier's world, no doubt, is as one-sided as that of old Meyerheim. His talkative Paul Prys, his brides with their modest shyness, his smart young fellows throwing amorous glances, his proud fathers, and his sorrow-stricken mothers are, it may be, types rather than beings breathing positive and individual life. Such a golden radiance of grace surrounds the pretty figures of his bare-footed rustic maidens as never pertained to those of the real world, but belongs rather to the shepherdess of a fairy tale who marries the prince. His figures must not be measured by the standard of realistic truth to nature. But they are the inhabitants of a dear, familiar world in which everything breathes of prettiness and lovable good-humour. It is almost touching to see with what purity and beauty life is reflected in Vautier's mind.

[Illustration: _Hanfstaengl._

VAUTIER. THE CONJURER.]

How dainty are these brown-eyed Swabian peasant girls, how tender and sympathetic the women, and how clean and well-behaved the children! You could believe that Vautier mixed with his peasants like a friend or a benevolent god-father, that he delighted in their harmless pleasures, that he took part in their griefs and cares. In his pictures he does not give an account of his impressions with severity or any deliberate attempt to amuse, but with indulgence and cordiality. It is not his design to excite or to thrill, to waken comedy through whimsicalities or mournfulness by anything tragical. Life reveals to him "merely pleasant things," as it did to Goethe during his tour in Italy, and even in its tragedies only people "who bear the inevitable with dignity." He never expressed boisterous grief: everything is subdued, and has that tenderness which is associated with the mere sound of his Christian name, Benjamin. Knaus has something of Menzel, Vautier of Memlinc: he has it even in the loving familiarity with which he penetrates minute detail. In their religious pictures the old German and Netherlandish masters painted everything, down to the lilies worked on the Virgin's loom, or the dust lying on the old service-book; and this thoroughly German delight in still life, this complacent rendering of minutiae, is found again in Vautier.

Men and their dwellings, animated nature and atmosphere, combine to make a pleasant world in his pictures. Vautier was one of the first to discover the magic of environment, the secret influence which unites a man to the soil from which he sprang, the thousand unknown, magnetic associations existing between outward things and the spirit, between the intuitions and the actions of man. The environment is not there like a stage scene in front of which the personages come and go; it lives and moves in the man himself. One feels at home in these snug and cosy rooms, where the Black Forest clock is ticking, where little, tasteless photographs look down from the wall with an honest, patriarchal air, where the floor is scoured so clean, and greasy green hats hang on splendid antlers. There is the great family bed with the flowered curtains, the massive immovable bench by the stove, the solid old table, around which young and old assemble at meal-times. There are the great cupboards for the treasures of the house, the prayer-book given to grandmother at her confirmation, the filigree ornaments, the glasses and coffee-cups, which are kept for show, not for daily use. Over the bedstead are hung the little pictures of saints painted on glass, and the consecrated tokens. From the window one overlooks other appurtenances of the house; gaudy scarlet runners clamber in from the little garden, blossoming fruit-trees stand in its midst, and the gable of the well-filled barn rises above it. Everything has an air of peace and prosperity, the mood of a Sunday forenoon; one almost fancies that one can catch the chime of the distant church bells through the blissful stillness. But completeness of effect and pictorial harmony are not to be demanded: the illustrated paper is better suited to his style than the exhibition.

[Illustration: VAUTIER. THE DANCING LESSON.

(By permission of the Berlin Photographic Co., the owners of the copyright.)]

The third member of the alliance is _Franz Defregger_, a man of splendid talent; of all the masters of the great Munich school of Piloty, he is at once the simplest and the healthiest. True it is, no doubt, that when posterity sifts and weighs his works, much of him, also, will be found too light. Defregger's art has suffered from his fame and from the temptations of the picture market. Moreover, he had not Vautier's fine sense of the limitations of his ability, but often represented things which he did not understand. He was less of a painter than any of the artists of Piloty's school, and more completely tethered by the size of his picture. He could not go beyond a certain space of canvas without suffering for it; and he bound his talent on the bed of Procrustes when he attempted to paint Madonnas, or placed himself with his Hofer pictures in the rank of historical painters. But as a _genre_ painter he stands beside Vautier, in the first line; and by these little _genre_ pictures--the simpler and quieter the better--and some of his genially conceived and charming portrait studies, he will survive. Those are

things which he understood and felt. He had himself lived amid the life he depicted, and so it was that what he depicted made such a powerful appeal to the heart.

[Illustration: VAUTIER. NOVEMBER.]

The year 1869 made him known. The Munich Exhibition had in that year a picture on a subject from the history of the Hofer rising of 1809. It represented how the little son of Speckbacher, one of the Tyrolese leaders, had come after his father, armed with a musket; and at the side of an old forester he is entering the room in which Speckbacher is just holding a council of war. The father springs up angry at his disobedience, but also proud of the little fellow's pluck. From this time Defregger's art was almost entirely devoted to the Tyrolese people. To paint the smart lads and neat lasses of Tyrol in joy and sorrow, love and hate, at work and merry-making, at home or outside on the mountain pasture, in all their beauty, strength, and robust health, was the life-long task for which he more than any other man had been created. He had, over Knaus and most other painters of village tales, the enormous advantage of not standing personally outside or above the people, and not regarding them with the superficial curiosity of a tourist--for he belonged to them himself. Others, if ironically disposed, saw in the rustic the stupid, comic peasant; or, if inclined to sentimentalism, introduced into the rural world the moods and feelings of "society," traits of drawing-room sensitiveness, the heavy air of the town. Models in national costume were grouped for pictures of Upper Bavarian rustic life. But Defregger, who up to the age of fifteen had kept his father's cattle on the pastures of the Ederhof, had shared the joys and sorrows of the peasantry long enough to know that they are neither comic nor sentimental people.

The roomy old farmhouse where he was born in 1835 lay isolated amid the wild mountains. He went about bare-footed and bare-headed, waded through deep snow when he made his way to school in winter, and wandered about amid the highland pastures with the flocks in summer. Milkmaids and wood-cutters, hunters and cowherds, were his only companions. At fifteen he was the head labourer of the estate, helped to thresh the corn, and worked on the arable land and in the stable and the barn like others. When he was twenty-three he lost his father and took over the farm himself: he was thus a man in the full sense of the word before his artistic calling was revealed to him. And this explains his qualities and defects. When he came to Piloty after the sale of his farm and his aimless sojourn in Innsbruck and Paris he was mature in mind; he was haunted by the impressions of his youth, and he wanted to represent the land and the people of Tyrol. But he was too old to become a good "painter." On the other hand, he possessed the great advantage of knowing what he wanted. The heroes of history did not interest him; it was only the Tyrolese woodmen who persisted in his brain. He left Piloty's studio almost as he had entered it--awkward, and painting

heavily and laboriously, and but very little impressed by Piloty's theatrical sentiment. His youth and his recollections were rooted in the life of the people; and with a faithful eye he caught earnest or cheerful phases of that life, and represented them simply and cordially: and if he had had the strength to offer a yet more effectual resistance to the prevalent ideal of beauty, there is no doubt that his stories would seem even more fresh and vigorous.

[Illustration: FRANZ DEFREGGER.]

"The Dance" was the first picture which followed that of "Speckbacher," and it was circulated through the world in thousands of reproductions. There are two delightful figures in it: the pretty milkmaid who looks around her, radiant with pleasure, and the wiry old Tyrolean who is lifting his foot, cased in a rough hobnail shoe, to dance to the Schuhplattler. At the same time he painted "The Prize Horse" returning to his native village from the show decked and garlanded and greeted exultantly by old and young as the pride of the place. "The Last Summons" was again a scene from the Tyrolean popular rising of 1809. All who can still carry a rifle, a scythe, or a pitchfork have enrolled themselves beneath the banners, and are marching out to battle over the rough village street. The wives and children are looking earnestly at the departing figures, whilst a little old woman is pressing her husband's hand. Everything was simply and genially rendered without sentimentality or emphasis, and the picture even makes an appeal by its colouring. As a sequel "The Return of the Victors" was produced in 1876: a troop of the Tyrolean levy is marching through its native mountain village, with a young peasant in advance, slightly wounded, and looking boldly round. Tyrolean banners are waving, and the fifes and drums and clarionet players bring up the rear. The faces of the men beam with the joy of victory, and women and children stand around to welcome those returning home. Joy, however, is harder to paint faithfully than sorrow. It is so easy to see that it has been artificially worked up from the model; nor is Defregger's picture entirely innocent on this charge.

[Illustration: Hanfstaengl.]

DEFREGGER. SPECKBACHER AND HIS SON.]

[Illustration: Hanfstaengl.]

DEFREGGER. THE WRESTLERS.]

"Andreas Hofer going to his Death" was his first concession to Piloty. Defregger had become professor at the Munich Academy, and was entered in the directory as "historical painter." The figures were therefore painted life size; and in the grouping and the choice of the "psychic moment" the style aimed at "grand painting." The result was the same emptiness which blusters through the historical pictures of the school

of Delaroche, Gallait, and Piloty. The familiar stage effect and stilted passion has taken the place of simple and easy naturalism. Nor was he able to give life to the great figures of a large canvas as he had done in the smaller picture of the "Return of the Victors." This is true of "The Peasant Muster" of 1883--which represented the Tyrolese, assembled in an arms manufactory, learning that the moment for striking had arrived--and of the last picture of the series, "Andreas Hofer receiving the Presents of the Emperor Francis in the Fortress of Innsbruck." All the great Hofer pictures, which in earlier days were honoured as his best performances, have done less for his memory than for that of the sturdy hero. The _genre_ picture was Defregger's vocation. There lay his strength, and as soon as he left that province he renounced his fine qualities.

[Illustration: _Cassell & Co._]

DEFREGGER. SISTER AND BROTHERS.]

[Illustration: _Hanfstaengl._]

DEFREGGER. THE PRIZE HORSE.]

And a holiday humour, a tendency to beautify what he saw, is spread over even his _genre_ pictures. They make one suppose that there is always sunshine in the happy land of Tyrol, that all the people are chaste and beautiful, all the young fellows fine and handsome, all the girls smart, every household cleanly and well-ordered, all married folk and children honest and kind; whereas in reality these milk-maids and woodmen are far less romantic in their conduct; and so many a townsman who avoids contact with the living people goes into raptures over them as they are pictures. With Vautier he shares this one-sidedness as well as his defective colour. Almost all his pictures are hard, dry, and diffident in colouring, but, as with Vautier, the man atones for the painter. From Defregger one asks for no qualities of colour and no realistic Tyrolese, since he has rendered himself in his pictures, and gives one a glimpse into his own heart; and a healthy, genial, and kindly heart it is. His idealism is not born of laboriously acquired principles of beauty; it expresses the temperament of a painter--a temperament which unconsciously sees the people through a medium whereby they are glorified. A rosy glow obscures sadness, ugliness, wretchedness, and misery, and shows only strength and health, tenderness and beauty, fidelity and courage. He treasured sunny memories of the cheerful radiance which rested on his home in the hour of his return; he painted the joy which swelled in his own breast as he beheld again the rocks of his native country, heard once more the peaceful chime of its Sabbath bells. And this is what gives his works their human, inward truth, little as they may be authentic documents as to the population of Tyrol.

Later this will be more impartially recognised than it possibly can be

at present. The larger the school of any artist, the more it will make his art trivial; and thus for a time the originality of the master himself seems to be mere trifling. The Tyrolese were depreciated in the market by Defregger's imitators; only too many have aped his painting of stiff leather breeches and woollen bodices, without putting inside them the vivid humanity which is so charming in a genuine Defregger. But his position in the history of art is not injured by this. He has done enough for his age; he has touched the hearts of many by his cheerful, fresh, and healthy art, and he would be certain of immortality had he thrown aside his brush altogether from the time when the progress of painting left him in the rear.

With Defregger, the head of the Tyrolese school, Gabl and Mathias Schmidt, standing at a measurable distance from him, may find a well-merited place. _Mathias Schmidt_, born in the Tyrolese Alps in the same year as Defregger, began with satirical representations of the local priesthood. A poor image-carver has arrived with his waggon at an inn, on the terrace of which are sitting a couple of well-fed ecclesiastics, and by them he is ironically called to account as he offers a crucifix for sale. A young priest, as an austere judge of morals, reproves a pair of lovers who are standing before him, or asks a young girl such insidious questions at the bridal examination that she lowers her eyes, blushing. His greatest picture was "The Emigration of the Zillerthal Protestants." Amongst later works, without controversial tendencies, "The Hunter's Greeting" and "The Lathered Parson" may be named. The latter is surprised by two pretty girls while shaving. To these may be added "The Parson's Patch," a picture of a robust housekeeper hastily mending a weak spot in the pastor's inexpressibles just before service.

Shortly after Defregger had painted his picture of "Speckbacher," _Alois Gabl_ came forward with his "Haspinger preaching Revolt," and followed it up by smaller pictures with a humorous touch, representing a levy of recruits in Tyrol, the dance at the inn interrupted by the entrance of the parson, magnates umpiring at the shooting butts, a bar with laughing girls, and the like.

In 1870, _Eduard Kurzbauer_, who died young, in his "Fugitives Overtaken" executed a work representing an entire class of painted illustrations. A young man who has eloped with a girl is discovered with her by her mother in a village inn. The old lady is looking reproachfully at her daughter, who is overwhelmed by shame and penitence; the young man is much moved, the old servant grave and respectful, the young landlady curious, and the postilion who has driven the eloping pair has a sly smirk. Elsewhere Kurzbauer, who is a fresh and lively anecdotist, painted principally episodes, arraying his figures in the peasant garb of the Black Forest: a rejected suitor takes a sad farewell of a perverse blonde who disdains his love; or the engagement of two lovers is hindered by the interference of the father.

[Illustration: _Cassell & Co._

DEFREGGER. ANDREAS HOFER APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF THE TYROL.]

Hugo Kauffmann, the son of Hermann Kauffmann, planted himself in the interior of village taverns or in front of them, and made his dressed-up models figure as hunters, telling incredible tales, dancing to the fiddle, or quarrelling over cards.

Another North German, _Wilhelm Riefstahl_, showed how the peasants in Appenzell or Bregenz conduct themselves at mournful gatherings, at their devotions in the open air, and at All Souls' Day Celebrations, and afterwards extended his artistic dominion over Rügen, Westphalia, and the Rhine country with true Mecklenburg thoroughness. He was a careful, conscientious worker, with a discontent at his own efforts in his composition, a certain ponderousness in his attempts at _genre_; but his diligently executed pictures--full of colour and painted in a peculiarly German manner--are highly prized in public galleries on account of their instructive soundness.

After the various classes of the German peasantry had been naturalised in the picture market by these narrative painters, _Eduard Grützner_, when religious controversy raged in the seventies, turned aside to discover drolleries in monastic life. This he did with the assistance of brown and yellowish white cowls, and the obese and copper-nosed models thereto pertaining. He depicts how the cellarer tastes a new wine, and the rest of the company await his verdict with anxiety; how the entire monastery is employed at the vintage, at the broaching of a wine cask or the brewing of the beer; how they tittle; how bored they are over their chess or their dice, their cards or their dominoes; how they whitewash old frescoes or search after forbidden books in the monastery library. This, according to Grützner, is the routine in which the life of monks revolves. At times amidst these figures appear foresters who tell of their adventures in the chase, or deliver hares at the cloister kitchen. And the more Grützner was forced year after year to make up for his decline as a colourist, by cramming his pictures with so-called humour, the greater was his success.

It was only long afterwards that _genre_ painting in broad-cloth came into vogue by the side of this _genre_ in peasant blouse and monastic cowl, and stories of the exchange and the manufactory by the side of village and monastic tales. Here Düsseldorf plays a part once more in the development of art. The neighbourhood of the great manufacturing towns on the Rhine could not but lead painters to these subjects.

Ludwig Bokelmann, who began by painting tragical domestic scenes--card players, and smoking shop-boys, in the style of Knaus--made the pawnshop a theme for art in 1875, and dexterously crowded into his picture all the types which popular fancy brings into association with the

conception: business-like indifference, poverty ashamed, fallen prosperity, bitter need, avarice, and the love of pleasure. In 1877, when the failure of the house of Spitzeder made a sensation in the papers, he painted his picture "The Savings Bank before the Announcement of Failure," which gave him another opportunity for ranging in front of the splendid building an assembly of deluded creditors of all classes, and of showing how they expressed their emotion according to temperament and education, by excited speeches, embittered countenances, gloomy resignation, or vivid gesticulation. Much attention was likewise excited by "The Arrest." In this picture a woman was being watched for by a policeman, whilst the neighbours--male and female--loitered round with the requisite expression of horror, indignation, sympathy, or indifferent curiosity. The opening of a will, the last moments of an electioneering struggle, scenes in the entrance hall of a court of justice, the emigrants' farewell, the gaming-table at Monte Carlo, and a village fire, were other newspaper episodes from the life of great towns which he rendered in paint.

His earlier associate in Düsseldorf, _Ferdinand Brütt_, after first painting _rococo_ pictures, owed his finest successes to the Stock Exchange. It, too, had its types: the great patrician merchants and bankers of solid reputation, the jobbers, break-neck speculators, and decayed old stagers; and, as Brütt rendered these current figures in a very intelligible manner, his pictures excited a great deal of attention. Acquittals and condemnations, acts of mortgage, emigration agents, comic electors, and prison visits, as further episodes from the social, political, and commercial life of great towns, fill up the odd corners of his little local chronicle.

Thus the German _genre_ painting ran approximately the same course as the English had done at the beginning of the century. At that time the kingdom of German art was not of this world. Classicism taught men to turn their eyes on the art of a past age. Art in Germany had progressed slowly, and at first with an uncertain and hesitating step, before it learnt that what blossoms here, and thrives and fades, should be the subject of its labours. Gradually it brought one sphere of reality after the other into its domain. Observation took the place of abstraction, and the discoverer that of the inventor. The painter went amongst his fellow-creatures, opened his eyes and his heart to share their fortunes and misfortunes, and to reproduce them in his own creation. He discovered the peculiarities of grades of life and professional classes. Every one of the beautiful German landscapes with its peasantry, every one of the monastic orders and every manufacturing town found its representative in _genre_ painting. The country was mapped out. Each one took over his plot, which he superintended, conscientiously, like an ethnographical museum. And just as fifty years before, Germany had been fertilised by England, so it now gave in its turn the principles of _genre_ painting to the powers of the second rank in art.

Even France was in some degree influenced. As if to indicate that Alsace would soon become German once more, after 1850 there appeared in that province certain painters who busied themselves with the narration of anecdote from rustic life quite in the manner of Knaus and Vautier.

Gustave Brion, the grand-nephew of Frederica of Sesenheim, settled in the Vosges, and there gave intelligence of a little world whose life flowed by, without toil, in gentle, patriarchal quietude, interrupted only by marriage feasts, birthdays, and funeral solemnities. He appears to have been rather fond of melancholy and solemn subjects. His interiors, with their sturdy and honest people, bulky old furniture, and large green faïence stoves, which are so dear to him, are delightful in their familiar homeliness and their cordial Alsatian and German character, and recall Vautier; in fact, he might well be termed the French Vautier. He lives in them himself--the quiet old man, who in his last years occupied himself solely with the management of his garden and the culture of flowers, or sat by the hour in an easy-chair at the window telling stories to his old dog Putz. But pictorial unity of effect must be asked from him as little as from Vautier.

Charles Marchal, too, was no painter, but an anecdotist, with a bias towards the humorous or sentimental; and so very refined and superior was he that he saw none but pretty peasant girls, who might easily be mistaken for "young ladies," if they exchanged their kerchiefs and bodices for a Parisian toilette. His chief picture was "The Hiring Fair" of 1864: pretty peasant girls are standing in a row along the street, bargaining with prospective masters before hiring themselves out.

[Illustration: GRÜTZNER. TWELFTH NIGHT.]

The most famous of this group of artists is Jules Breton, who after various humorous and sentimental pieces placed himself in 1853 in the front rank of the French painters of rustics by his "Return of the Reapers" (Musée Luxembourg). His "Gleaners" in 1855, "Blessing the Fields" in 1857, and "The Erection of the Picture of Christ in the Churchyard" were pretty enough to please the public, and sufficiently sound in technique not to be a stumbling-block to artists. After 1861 he conceived an enthusiasm for sunsets, and was never weary of depicting the hour when the fair forms of peasant maidens stand gracefully out against the quiet golden horizon. Jules Breton wrote many poems, and a vein of poetry runs through his pictures. They tell of the sadness of the land when the fields sleep dreamily beneath the shadows of the evening, touched by the last ray of the departing sun; but they tell of it in verses where the same rhymes are repeated with wearisome monotony. Breton is a charming and sympathetic figure, but he never quite conquered Classicism. His gleaners moving across the field in the evening twilight bear witness to an attentive, deliberate study of the works of Leopold Robert; and unfortunately much of the emphasis and classical style of Robert has been transmitted to Breton's rustic

maidens. They have most decidedly a lingering weakness for pose, and a sharp touch of the formula of the schools. There is an affectation of style in their garb, and their hands are those of bonnes who have never even handled a rake. Breton, as Millet said of him, paints girls who are too beautiful to remain in the country. His art is a well-bred, idyllic painting, with gilt edges; it is pleasing and full of delicate figures which are always elegant and always correct, but it is a little like flat lemonade; it is monotonous and only too carefully composed, destitute of all masculinity and seldom avoiding the reef of affectation.

Norway and Sweden were fructified from Düsseldorf immediately. When Tidemand had shown the way, the academy on the Rhine was the high school for all the sons of the North during the fifties. They set to translating Knaus and Vautier into Swedish and Norwegian, and caught the tone of their originals so exactly that they almost seem more Düsseldorfian than the Düsseldorfers themselves.

Karl D'Uncker, who arrived in 1851 and died in 1866, was led by the influence of Vautier to turn to little humorous incidents. After "The Two Deaf Friends" (two old people very hard of hearing, who are making comical efforts to understand each other) and "The Vagabond Musician and his Daughter before the Village Magistrates" there followed in 1858 the scene in "The Pawnshop," which divided the honours of the year with Knaus's "Golden Wedding." He is an artistic compromise between Knaus and Schroedter, a keen observer and a humorous narrator, who takes special pleasure in the sharp opposition of characteristic figures. In his "Pawnshop" and his "Third Class Waiting Room" vagabonds mingle in the crowd beside honest people, beggars beside retired tradesmen, old procuresses beside pure and innocent girls, and heartless misers beside warm-hearted philanthropists. In these satirically humorous little comedies Swedish costume has been rightly left out of sight. This ethnographical element was the forte of Bengt Nordenberg, who as a copyist of Tidemand gradually became the Riefstahl of the North. His "Golden Wedding in Blekingen," his "Bridal Procession," his "Collection of Tithes," "The Pietists," and "The Promenade at the Well," are of the same ethnographical fidelity and the same anecdotic dryness. He gets his best effects when he strikes an idyllic, childlike note or one of patriarchal geniality. The "Bridal Procession" received in the village with salvoes and music, "The Newly Married Pair" making a first visit to the parents of one of them, the picture of schoolboys playing tricks upon an old organist, that of children mourning over a lamb slain by a wolf, are, in the style of the sixties, the works of a modest and amiable anecdotist, who had a fine sense for the peaceful, familiar side of everyday life in town and country.

[Illustration: BRION. JEAN VALJEAN.]

In Wilhelm Wallander, as in Madou, noise and frolic and jest have the

upper hand. His pictures are like saucy street ditties sung to a barrel-organ. The crowd at the market-place, the gossip in the spinning-room on a holiday evening, hop-pickings, dances, auctions on old estates, weddings, and the guard turning out, are his favourite scenes. Even when he came to Düsseldorf he was preceded by his fame as a jolly fellow and a clever draughtsman, and when he exhibited his "Market in Vingaker" he was greeted as another Teniers. His "Hop-Harvest" is like a waxwork show of teasing lads and laughing lasses. He was an incisive humorist and a spirited narrator, who under all circumstances was more inclined to jest than to touch idyllic and elegiac chords. In his pictures peasant girls never wander solitary across the country, for some lad who is passing by always has a joke to crack with them; it never happens that girls sit lonely by the hearth, there is always a lover to peep out laughing from behind the cupboard door.

Anders Koskull cultivated the genre picture of children in a more elegiac fashion; he has poor people sitting in the sun, or peasant families in the Sunday stillness laying wreaths upon the graves of their dear ones in the churchyard. Kilian Zoll, like Meyer of Bremen, painted very childish pictures of women spinning, children with cats, the joys of grandmother, and the like. Peter Eskilson turned to the representation of an idyllic age of honest yeomen, and has given in his best known work, "A Game of Skittles in Faggens," a pleasant picture from peasant life in the age of pig-tails. The object of August Jernberg's study was the Westphalian peasant with his slouching hat, long white coat, flowered waistcoat, and large silver buttons. He was specially fond of painting dancing bears surrounded by a crowd of amused spectators, or annual fairs, for which a picturesque part of old Düsseldorf served as a background. Ferdinand Fagerlin has something attractive in his simplicity and good-humour. If he laughs, as he delights in doing, his laughter is cordial and kind-hearted, and if he touches an elegiac chord he can guard against sentimentalism. In contrast with D'Uncker and Wallander, who always hunted after character pieces, he devotes himself to expression with much feeling, and interprets it delicately even in its finer nuances. Henry Ritter, who influenced him powerfully in the beginning of his career, drew his attention to Holland, and Fagerlin's quiet art harmonises with the Dutch phlegm. Within the four walls of his fishermen's huts there are none but honest grey-beards and quiet women, active wives and busy maidens, vigorous sailors and lively peasant lads. But his pictures are sympathetic in spite of this one-sided optimism, since the sentiment is not too affected nor the anecdotic points too heavily underlined.

Amongst the Norwegians belonging to this group is V. Stoltenberg-Lerche, who with the aid of appropriate accessories adapted the interiors of cloisters and churches to genre pictures, such as "Tithe Day in the Cloister," "The Cloister Library," and "The Visit of a Cardinal to the Cloister," and so forth. Hans Dahl, a juste-milieu between Tidemand and Emanuel Spitzer, carried the Düsseldorf village

idyll down to the present time. "Knitting the Stocking" (girls knitting on the edge of a lake), "Feminine Attraction" (a lad with three peasant maidens who are dragging a boat to shore in spite of his resistance), "A Child of Nature" (a little girl engaged to sit as model to a painter amongst the mountains, and running away in alarm), "The Ladies' Boarding School on the Ice," "First Pay Duty," etc., are some of the witty titles of his wares, which are scattered over Europe and America. Everything is sunny, everything laughs, the landscapes as well as the figures; and if Dahl had painted fifty years ago, his fair maidens with heavy blond plaits, well-bred carriage, and delicate hands that have never been disfigured by work, would undoubtedly have assured him no unimportant place beside old Meyerheim in the history of the development of the _genre_ picture.

An offshoot from the Munich painting of rustics shot up into a vigorous sapling in Hungary. The process of refining the raw talents of the Magyar race had been perfected on the shores of the Isar, and the Hungarians showed gratitude to their masters by applying the principles of the Munich _genre_ to Magyar subjects when they returned home. The Hungarian rooms of modern exhibitions have consequently a very local impress. Everything seems aboriginal, Magyar to the core, and purely national. Gipsies are playing the fiddle and Hungarian national songs ring forth, acrobats exhibit, slender sons of Pusta sit in Hungarian village taverns over their tokay, muscular peasant lads jest with buxom, black-eyed girls, smart hussars parade their irresistible charms before lively damsels, and recruits endeavour to imbibe a potent enthusiasm for the business of war from the juice of the grape. Stiff peasants, limber gipsies, old people dancing, smart youths, the laughing faces of girls and bold fellows with flashing eyes, quarrelsome heroes quick with the knife, tipsy soldiers and swearing sergeants, drunkards, suffering women and poor orphans, pawnshops and vagabonds, legal suits, electioneering scenes, village tragedies and comic proposals, artful shop-boys, and criminals condemned to death, the gay confusion of fairs and the merry return from the harvest and the vintage, waxed moustaches, green and red caps and short pipes, tokay, Banat wheat, Alfoeld tobacco, and Sarkad cattle,--such are the elements worked up, as the occasion demanded, either into little tales or great and thrilling romances. And the names of the painters are as thoroughly Magyar as are the figures. Beside _Ludwig Ebner_, _Paul Boehm_, and _Otto von Baditz_, which have a German sound, one comes across such names as _Koloman Déry_, _Julius Aggházi_, _Alexander Bihari_, _Ignaz Ruskovics_, _Johann Jankó_, _Tihamér Margitay_, _Paul Vagó_, _Arpad Fessty_, _Otto Koroknyai_, _D. Skuteczky_, etc.

[Illustration: _L'Art._

MARCHAL. THE HIRING FAIR.]

But setting aside the altered names and the altered locality and garb,

the substance of these pictures is precisely the same as that of the Munich pictures of twenty years before: dance and play, maternal happiness, wooing, and the invitation to the wedding. Instead of the _Schuhplattler_ they paint the Czarda, instead of the drover's cottage the taverns of Pesth, instead of the blue Bavarian uniform the green of the Magyar Hussars. Their painting is tokay adulterated with Isar water, or Isar water with a flavour of tokay. What seems national is at bottom only their antiquated standpoint. It is a typical development repeating itself in the nineteenth century through all branches of art; the sun rises in the West and sets in the East. Any other progress than that of the gradual expansion of subject-matter cannot be established in favour of the productions of all this _genre_ painting. In colour and in substance they represent a phase of art which the leading countries of Europe had already left behind about the middle of the century, and which had to be overcome elsewhere, if painting was again to be what it had been in the old, good periods.

[Illustration: _Seemann, Leipzig._

PETTENKOFEN. A HUNGARIAN VILLAGE (PENCIL DRAWING).]

For as yet all these _genre_ painters were the children of Hogarth; their productions were the outcome of the same spirit, plebeian and alien to art, which had come into painting when the middle classes began to hold a more important position in society. Yet their artistic significance ought not to be and cannot be contested. In an age which was prouder of its antiquarian knowledge than of its own achievements, which recognised the faithful imitation of the method of all past periods, the mere performance of a delicate task, as the highest aim of art, these _genre_ painters were the first to portray the actual man of the nineteenth century; the first to desert museums and appeal to nature, and thus to lay the foundation of modern painting. They wandered in the country, looked at reality, sought to imitate it, and often displayed in their studies a marvellous directness of insight. But these vigorous initial studies were too modest to find favour and esteem with a public as yet insufficiently educated for the appreciation of art. Whilst in England the exhibitions of the Royal Academy and in France those of the Paris Salon created, comparatively early, a certain ground for the comprehension of art, the _genre_ painters of other countries worked up to and into the sixties without the appropriate social combinations. After 1828 the Art Unions began to usurp the position of that refined society which had formerly played the Mæcenæ as the leading dictators of taste.

[Illustration: _Seemann, Leipzig._

BRETON. THE RETURN OF THE REAPERS.]

Albrecht Adam, who was chiefly responsible for the foundation of the

Munich Union, has himself spoken clearly in his autobiography of the advantages and disadvantages of this step. "Often," he writes, "often have I asked myself whether I have done good or not by this scheme, and to this hour I have not been able to make up my mind. The cultivation of art clearly received an entirely different bias from that which it had in earlier days. What was formerly done by artistic and judicious connoisseurs was now placed for the most part in the hands of the people. Like so much else in the world, that had its advantages, but in practice the shady side of the matter became very obvious." The disadvantages were specially these: "the people" for a long time could only understand such paintings as represented a story in a broad and easy fashion; paintings which in the narrative cohesion of the subject represented might be read off at a glance, since the mere art of reading had been learnt at school, rather than those which deserved and required careful study. The demand for anecdotic subject was only waived in the case of ethnographical painting, in Italian and Oriental genre; for here the singular types, pictorial costumes, and peculiar customs of foreign countries were in themselves enough to provoke curiosity. What was prized in the picture was merely something external, the subject of representation, not the representation itself, the matter and not the manner, that which concerned the theme, that which fell entirely beyond the province of art. The illustrated periodicals which had been making their appearance since the forties gave a further impetus to this phase of taste. The more inducement there was to guess charades, the more injury was done to the sensuous enjoyment of art; for the accompanying text of the author merely translated the pictures back into their natural element. Painters, however, were not unwilling to reconcile themselves to the circumstances, because, as a result of their technical insufficiency, they were forced, on their side, to try to lend their pictures the adjunct of superficial interest by anecdotic additions. Literary humour had to serve the purpose of pictorial humour, and the talent of the narrator was necessary to make up for their inadequate artistic qualities. As the historical painters conveyed the knowledge of history in a popular style, the genre painters set up as agreeable tattlers, excellent anecdotists: they were in turn droll, meditative, sentimental, and pathetic, but they were not painters.

[Illustration: L'Art.

BRETON. THE GLEANER.]

And painters, under these conditions, they could not possibly become. For though it is often urged in older books on the history of art that modern genre painting far outstripped the old Dutch genre in incisiveness of characterisation, depth of psychological conception, and opulence of invention, these merits are bought at the expense of all pictorial harmony. In the days of Rembrandt the Dutch were painters to their fingers' ends, and they were able to be so because they appealed to a public whose taste was adequately trained to take a refined

pleasure in the contemplation of works of art which had sterling merits of colour. Mieris painted the voluptuous ruffling of silken stuffs; Van der Meer, the mild light stealing through little windows into quiet chambers, and playing upon burnished vessels of copper and pewter, on majolica dishes and silver chattels, on chests and coverings; De Hoogh, the sunbeam streaming like a golden shaft of dust from some bright lateral space into a darker ante-chamber. Each one set before himself different problems, and each ran through an artistic course of development.

[Illustration: WALLENDER. THE RETURN.]

The more recent masters are mature from their first appearance; the Hungarians paint exactly like the Swedes and the Germans, and their pictures have ideas for the theme, but never such as are purely artistic. Like simple woodland birds, they sing melodies which are, in some ways, exceedingly pretty; but their plumage is not equal to their song. No man can be painter and genre painter at the same time. The principal difference between them is this: a painter sees his picture, rather than what may be extracted from it by thought; the genre painter, on the other hand, has an idea in his mind, an "invention," and plans out a picture for its expression. The painter does not trouble his head about the subject and the narrative contents; his poetry lies in the kingdom of colour. There reigns in his works--take Brouwer, for example--an authentic, uniformly plastic, and penetrative life welling from the artist's soul. But the leading motive for the genre painter is the subject as such. For example, he will paint a children's festival precisely because it is a children's festival. But one must be a Jan Steen to accomplish such a task in a soundly artistic manner. The observation of these more recent painters meanwhile ventured no further than detail, and did not know what to do with the picture as a whole. They got over their difficulties because they "invented" the scene, made the children pose in the places required by the situation, and then composed these studies. The end was accomplished when the leading heroes of the piece had been characterised and the others well traced. The colouring was merely an unessential adjunct, and in a purely artistic sense not at all possible. For a picture which has come into being through a piecing together from separate copies of set models, and of costumes, vessels, interiors, etc., may be ever so true to nature in details, but this mosaic work is bound systematically to destroy the pictorial appearance, unity, and quietude of the whole. Knaus is perhaps the only one who, as a fine connoisseur of colour, concealed this scrap-book drudgery, and achieved a certain congruity of colour in a really artistic manner by a subtilised method of harmony. But as regards the pictures of all the others, it is clear at once that, as Heine wrote, "they have been rather edited than painted." The effectiveness of the picture was lost in the detail, and even the truth of detail was lost in the end in the opulence of subject, seductive as that was upon the first glance. For, as it was held that the incident

subjected to treatment--the more circumstantial the better--ought to be mirrored through all grades and variations of emotion in the faces, in the gestures of a family, of the gossips, of the neighbours, of the public in the street, the inevitable consequence was that the artist, to make himself understood, was invariably driven to exaggerate the characterisation, and to set in the place of the unconstrained expression of nature that which has been histrionically drilled into the model. Not less did the attempt to unite these set figures as a composition in one frame lead to an intolerable stencilling. The rules derived from historical painting in a time dominated by that form of art were applied to our chequered and many-sided modern life. Since the structure of this composition prescribed laws from which the undesigned manifestation of individual objects is free, the studies after nature had to be readjusted in the picture according to necessity. There were attitudes in a conventional sense beautiful, but unnatural and strained, and therefore creating an unpleasing effect. An arbitrary construction, a forced method of composition, usurped the place of what was flexible, various, and apparently casual. The painters did not fit the separate part as it really was into the totality which the coherence of life demands: they arranged scenes of comedy out of realistic elements just as a stage manager would put them together.

And this indicates the further course which development was obliged to take. When Hogarth was left behind, painting had once more gained the independence which it had had in the great periods of art. The painter was forced to cease from treating secondary qualities--such as humour and narrative power--as though they were of the first account; and the public had to begin to understand pictures as paintings and not as painted stories. An "empty subject" well painted is to be preferred to an "interesting theme" badly painted. Pictures of life must drive out tableaux vivants, and human beings dislodge character types which curiosity renders attractive. Rather let there be a moment of breathing reality rendered by purely artistic means of expression than the most complete village tale defectively narrated; rather the simplest figure rendered with actuality and no thought of self than the most suggestive and ingenious characterisation. A conception, coloured by the temperament of the artist, of what was simple and inartificial, expressing nature at every step, had to take the place of laborious composition crowded with figures, the plainness and truth of sterling art to overcome what was overloaded and arbitrary, and the fragment of nature seized with spontaneous freshness to supplant episodes put together out of fragmentary observations. Only such painting as confined itself, like that of the Dutch, "to the bare empirical observation of surrounding reality," renouncing literary byplay, spirited anecdotic fancies, and all those rules of beauty which enslave nature, could really become the basis of modern art: and this the landscape painters created. When once these masters resolved to paint from nature, and no longer from their inner consciousness, there inevitably came a day when some one amongst them wished to place in the field or the forest, which

he had painted after nature, a figure, and then felt the necessity of bringing that figure into his picture just as he had seen it, without giving it an anecdote mission or forcing it arbitrarily into his compositions. The landscapist found the woodcutter in the forest, and the woodcutter seemed to him the ideal he was seeking; the peasant seemed to him to have the right to stand amid the furrows he had traced with his plough. He no longer drove the fisher and the sailor from their barks, and had no scruple in representing the good peasant woman, laden with wood, striding forwards in his picture just as she strode through the forest. And so entry was made into the way of simplicity; the top-heavy burden of interesting subject-matter was thrown aside, and the truth of figures and environments was gained. The age contained all the conditions for bringing landscape painting such as this to maturity.

A GENERAL VIEW OF MODERN VOICE CULTURE

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A GENERAL VIEW OF MODERN VOICE CULTURE

All the materials of modern methods have now been described. The subject next to be considered is the manner in which these materials are utilized in practical instruction. In other words, what is a method of Voice Culture?

In the present state of Vocal Science, the subject of tone-production overshadows everything else in difficulty. When once the correct vocal action has been acquired, the student's progress is assured. Every other feature of the singer's education is simply a matter of time and application. But, under present conditions, the acquirement of the correct vocal action is extremely uncertain. On account of its fundamental importance, and more especially of its difficulty, the subject of tone-production is the most prominent topic of instruction in singing. The term "method" is therefore applied solely to the means used for imparting the correct vocal action.

This use of the word is in accordance with the accepted theory of Voice Culture. The general belief is that tone-production is entirely distinct from vocal technique. Technical studies cannot profitably be undertaken, according to the prevailing idea, until the correct management of the vocal organs has been established. This idea is supposed to be followed out in modern instruction. It is generally assumed that the voice is brought under control through a definite series of exercises; these exercises are supposed to follow, one after the other, according to a well-defined system. The term "method" implies this systematic arrangement of exercises. It indicates that vocal training is a matter of precise knowledge and orderly progression.

This represents the accepted ideal of Voice Culture, rather than the actual condition. The idea that the vocal management should be imparted specially, as something preliminary to the technical training of the voice, is not carried out in practice. Teachers generally are striving to bring their systems into conformity with this ideal standard. They use the expression, "placing the voice," to describe the preliminary training in tone-production. But no successful system of this type has ever been evolved. The correct management of the voice never is imparted in the manner indicated by this ideal of instruction. Tone-production continues, throughout the entire course of study, to be the most important topic of instruction.

In order to understand the nature of a method of Voice Culture, it is necessary first to consider the relation which exists, in modern instruction, between training in tone-production, and the development of vocal technique. According to the accepted theory, the voice must be "placed" before the real study of singing is undertaken. After the voice has been properly "placed," it is supposed to be in condition to be developed by practice in singing technical exercises. But in actual practice this distinction between "voice-placing" exercises and technical studies is seldom drawn. The voice is trained, almost from the beginning of the course of study, by practice in actual singing. The earliest exercises used for "placing the voice" are in every respect technical studies,--single tones and syllables, scale passages, arpeggios, etc. It is impossible to produce even a single tone without embodying some feature of technique. Practice therefore serves a double purpose; it brings the voice gradually to the condition of perfect action, and at the same time it develops the technique. The student advances gradually toward the correct manner of tone-production, and this progress is evidenced solely by the improved technical use of the voice. Considerable technical facility is attained before the tone-production becomes absolutely perfect.

A vocal student's practice in singing is not confined to technical exercises, strictly speaking. Vocalises, songs, and arias are taken up, usually very early in the course of study. Moreover, attention is nearly always paid to musical expression and to artistic rendition, as well as to the vocal action and the technical use of the voice. This is true, whether the student sings an exercise, a vocalise, a song, or an aria.

For daily home practice, the student sings, usually, first some exercises, then a few vocalises, and finally several songs and arias. Every teacher has at command a wide range of compositions of all these kinds, carefully graded as to technical and musical difficulty. As the pupil advances, more and more difficult works are undertaken. For each stage of advancement the teacher chooses the compositions best adapted to carry the student's progress still further.

There is no point in this development at which instruction in tone-production ceases, and the technical training of the voice is begun. On the contrary, the means used for imparting the correct vocal action are interspersed with the other materials of instruction, both technical and artistic, throughout the entire course of study. Moreover, the training in tone-production is carried on during the singing of the compositions just described, as well as by practice on "voice-placing" exercises strictly speaking.

A method of instruction in singing therefore consists primarily of a set of mechanical rules and directions for managing the voice, and secondarily of a series of exercises, both toneless and vocal, so

designed that the student may directly apply in practising them the rules and directions for vocal management. It must not be understood however that the mechanical rules are applied only to the exercises specially designed for this purpose. These rules and directions are also intended to be applied to everything the student sings,--exercises, technical studies, and musical compositions.

It will be recalled that the review of the topics of modern vocal instruction covered three distinct types of materials. First, the purely mechanical doctrines, commonly regarded as the only strictly scientific principles of Voice Culture. These are, the rules for the management of the breath, of the registers, of laryngeal action, and of the resonance cavities, and also the directions for attacking the tone, and for forward emission. The second class of materials is held by strict adherents of the scientific idea to be purely empirical; this class includes the traditional precepts of the old Italian school, and also all the topics of instruction based on the singer's sensations. A third class of materials is found in the attempts to interpret the empirical doctrines in the light of the scientific analysis of the vocal action.

To enumerate and classify all the methods of instruction in vogue would be almost an impossibility. Absolutely no uniformity can be found on any topic. Even among the accepted doctrines of Vocal Science there are many controverted points. Five distinct schools of breathing are represented, two of breath-control. Of well worked-out systems of registers, at least twenty could be enumerated. Fully this number of theories are offered regarding the correct positions of the larynx, soft palate, and tongue. Two opposed theories are held as to nasal resonance. Further, the empirical doctrines are always stated so loosely that no real unanimity of view can be found on any one of them.

Every vocal teacher selects the materials of instruction from these controverted doctrines, but neither rule nor reason determines what materials shall be embodied in any one method. There is no coherence whatever in the matter. Further, there is no agreement as to which topics of instruction are most important. One teacher may emphasize breath-control and support of tone as the foundations of the correct vocal action, another may give this position to nasal resonance and forward placing. Yet both these teachers may include in their methods about the same topics. The methods seem entirely different, only because each makes some one or two doctrines the most important. In short, it might almost be said that there are as many methods as teachers.

Three fairly distinct types of method may be defined, depending on the class of materials adopted. At one extreme are found those teachers who attempt to follow strictly the scientific principles. These teachers generally profess to employ only the purely mechanical doctrines of Vocal Science, and to ignore all empirical interpretations of these doctrines. They generally devote a portion of every lesson to toneless

muscular drills, and insist that their pupils practise every exercise in singing, with special attention to the throat action. These teachers attempt to follow a definite plan and order in the giving of exercises and rules. This systematic arrangement of instruction is, however, seldom followed out consistently with any one student. An important reason for this is considered in Chapter I of Part II.

A very different type of method is taught by many teachers who pay special attention to the empirical topics of instruction. Of course no teacher professes to teach empirically; on the contrary, every method is called scientific, no matter what materials it embodies. Indeed, a very little attention paid to breathing, attack, registers, and nasal resonance, is enough to relieve any teacher of the reproach of empiricism. The teachers now being considered touch to some extent on these topics; but most of their instruction is based on the traditional precepts, the singer's sensations, and the special vowel and consonant drills. In the first few lessons of the course they usually give some special breathing exercises, but almost always ignore breath-control. Not much is done for vocal control in the strictly muscular sense. Special "voice-placing" exercises are not used to any such extent as in the strictly scientific methods just described, the voice-placing work being usually done on vocalises, songs, and arias. No system whatever is followed, or even attempted, in the sequence of topics touched upon. The directions, "Breathe deeper on that phrase," "Bring that tone more forward," "Open your throat for that _ah_," "Feel that tone higher up in the head," may follow one after the other within five minutes of instruction.

Teachers of this type are frequently charged, by the strict advocates of mechanical instruction, with a practice commonly known as "wearing the voice into place." This expression is used to indicate the total abandonment of system in imparting the correct vocal action. It means that the teacher simply has the pupil sing at random, trusting to chance, or to some vague intuitive process, to bring about the correct use of the voice. To the vocal scientist, "wearing the voice into place" represents the depth of empiricism.

The great majority of teachers occupy a middle ground between the two types just described. Teachers of this class touch, more or less, on every topic of instruction, mechanical, empirical, and interpretive. Their application of most of the topics of instruction is not quite so mechanical as in the first type of method considered. The student's attention is always directed to the vocal organs, but the idea of direct muscular control is not so consistently put forward. As a rule, the attempt is made in the first stages of instruction to follow a systematic plan. Breathing, and perhaps breath-control, are first taught as muscular drills, and then applied on single tones. Attack is generally taken up next, then simple exercises in the medium register. Following this, the chest and head registers are placed, and the

attention is turned to emission and resonance. But in most cases, when the pupil has covered three or four terms of twenty lessons each, all system is abandoned. The method from that time on is about of the type described as empirical.

It must be remembered that this classification of methods is at best very crude. It would not be easy to pick out any one teacher who adheres consistently to any of the three forms of instruction described. All that can be said is that a teacher usually tends somewhat more to one type than to another.

Further, the degree of prominence given to the idea of direct mechanical control of the voice does not classify a method quite satisfactorily. Without exception every teacher adheres to the prevailing idea, that the voice must be controlled and guided in some direct way,--that the singer "must do something" to cause the vocal organs to operate properly. All the materials of instruction, mechanical and empirical, are utilized for the sole purpose of enabling the student to learn how to "do this something."

Several names are used by teachers to describe their methods. One professes to teach a "natural method," another the "pure Italian school of Bel Canto," a third the "old Italian method as illustrated by Vocal Science," a fourth the "strict scientific system of Voice Culture." No attention need be paid to these expressions, as they are seldom accurate descriptions.

Vocal lessons are usually of thirty minutes' duration. Each student generally takes two such lessons every week, although in some cases three, four, or even more are taken. A description of a few typical lessons will show how the materials of instruction are practically utilized.

Example 1: The student takes a few preliminary toneless breaths. Then follow, in the order given, a few short tones for practice on attack, some sustained tones on the vowel ah, exercises on three, four, and five notes, ascending and descending, a single tone followed by the octave jump up and descending scale, this last rising by semitones through several keys. In these exercises the student's attention is directed at random to the correct use of the registers, to nasal resonance, forward emission, etc. This consumes ten or twelve minutes of the lesson time. More elaborate exercises on scale passages are then sung, lasting another five minutes. These are followed by a vocalise or two, and a couple of songs or arias, which fill out the thirty minutes.

Example 2: A few breathing exercises are practised, followed by single tones and short scale passages, the whole lasting about five minutes. Then the student is drilled for some ten minutes on "placing the head tones," in the manner described in the section on special vowel and

consonant drills. These exercises are varied by swelling the high tone, by changing the vowels, and by elaborating the descending scale passages. The remaining fifteen minutes are devoted to vocalises and songs.

Example 3: This is an advanced pupil, whose voice is supposed to be fairly well "placed." Technical exercises of some difficulty are sung, covering a range of an octave and a half, or a little more. The teacher interrupts occasionally to say "Sing those lower notes more in the chest voice," "Place the upper notes higher in the head," "Don't let your vocal cords open on that ah," "Sing that again and make the tones cleaner," etc. One or two arias are then sung, interspersed with instructions of the same sort, and also with suggestions regarding style, delivery, and expression.

For daily practice between lessons, the student sings usually the same exercises and studies included in the previous lesson, and also commits to memory compositions assigned for future study.

Examples of this kind might be multiplied indefinitely, but the main points have been fairly well brought out. Most important to be noticed is the fact that the voice is trained by practice in actual singing. In the whole scheme of modern Voice Culture, toneless muscular drills consume only an insignificant proportion of the time devoted to lessons. Further, the number of exercises and musical compositions embraced in a single half-hour lesson is very small. On the other hand, no limit can be set to the number of topics of vocal control touched on in any one lesson. These latter are used, throughout the whole range of instruction, without any systematic sequence. Whatever fault of production the pupil's tones indicate, the teacher calls attention to the fault, and gives the supposedly appropriate rule for its correction.

THE EQUILIBRISTS

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Hugues Le Roux and Jules Garnier

The equilibrists are the most artistic acrobats, the true Olympians.

The gymnast excites our admiration by the marvellous development of his thorax and limbs, and by the epic relief of his muscles. The equilibrist does not require the same effort in his work. The beauty of the performance lies in the delicacy, variety, facility, and grace of the artist's movements, and on this account women excel as equilibrists, for men cannot reconcile themselves to the suppression of their [p210] strength in the feats they achieve, and therefore take a second rank in equilibrium.

They prefer special branches of the art, and are usually jugglers, bicyclists, or antipodeans. . . .

A proverb is current behind the scenes of the circus, to the effect that love destroys the centre of gravity in tight-rope dancers, and as a rule equilibrists—that is to say the true artists, not the pretty girls who use the cord as a springing-board—might rank with the Roman vestals. Their reputation is their fortune, and they are carefully guarded by their parents. It is not only a question of averting the danger of maternity, which ends the artistic career of an equilibrist. No risk must be encountered of anything that could damage the artist's health; and, therefore, those who are particular on these points can enjoy the performance of an equilibrist without any uneasiness about her private life.

The children of acrobats are equilibrists and jugglers from their birth. Stroll into a circus some morning during rehearsal, you will see all the corners filled with boys and girls, who, on every tightened rope and round the iron bars, are imitating the paternal exercises for their own amusement. I remember, one day in London, witnessing a curious scene in a seventh-floor garret. Under the roof two cords were stretched across the attic; a young boy was practising walking on one of them without a balance; on the other a monkey was faithfully copying the gestures of his companion. The professor had probably gone out to buy some tobacco; in his absence the two dancers silently continued their parallel work. I can tell you that acrobats learnt the value of mutual instruction before the schoolmasters!
[p211]

The lowest step of equilibrist art is the globe performance.

Walking upon the rolling ball, forward or backward, vaulting [p212] and dancing upon it, are the A B C of the profession. This old-fashioned accomplishment is, therefore, never used, unless some new invention is added to increase the difficulty.

This has happened with Lady Alphonsine and the Russian Frankloff, whom we saw walking upon the water at the Neuilly _fête_, standing upon a ballast-tub, which he rapidly turned round with his feet. Lady Alphonsine ascended a small spiral upon her globe. It resembled the winding turn upon a screw, and was twisted round a mast fifteen or eighteen feet high. The ascension is not so bad, but I assure you that the descent gives you some trouble. It is necessary to restrain the enormous wooden ball, always on the verge of escaping, and the feet patter frantically, vibrating like the sounding-board of a mandoline. Here the effect produced is out of proportion to the exertion forced upon the artist; and this performance has another inconvenience: if [p213] it be continued for too long it spoils the shape of the leg by undue development of the calf—two reasons why the globe should not be reinstated in the esteem of the public.

However, here as elsewhere, fashion rules the world, and _tight-rope dancing_, after falling into abeyance for a time, is now apparently returning to favour.

If, some fine morning, we may find ourselves globe spiral ascensionists with little previous exertion, no one can become a tight-rope dancer without much patient labour. You see how easily the rope-dancer runs across her narrow path, and may feel tempted to say, “Really, it only requires nerve to do as much.” But it is a pity that, for your own edification, you were not present at the artist’s first experiments.

All the strength of the dancer lies in the back and in the rigidity of the legs. On this account children cannot be placed upon the cord before they are ten years old. The apparatus used in these performances is very simple, and has not changed since antiquity. The cord is raised upon “_croisés_,” two crossed sticks, at each end, which form two X of different size. The X at the back is the highest, so that it may support the back of the dancer during the intervals of rest. The second X, or “_croisé de face_” which bears the “_guidon_” or _object of sight_, from which the dancer never moves his eyes, is not higher than the cord, which is attached at each end by cross bars of flexible wood. In Europe we use the ash, but the Americans use a still more pliant wood, the _ixry_.

The whole apparatus is fixed by an arrangement called a “_cadrolle_” of pulleys. The first time the dancer attempts to cross the cord he is supported by straps on either side. [p214] With the balancing-pole carefully held in both hands, his eyes fixed upon

the point of sight, he endeavours to turn his feet out as much as possible, treading first on the heel and then upon the great toe. After a few months' practice he can dance the “_sabotière_” which does not wound his still tender feet. The other exercises which he must slowly acquire are the _walk forward_, the _walk backward_, the _dangerous spring forward_, the _dangerous spring backward_ the _horse spring_, and the art of _springing from one foot to the other_.

This is the classic series of exercises. When the dancer has once mastered them his own imagination must aid his performance. He must attempt some new feat upon the cord that no one else has yet tried, and this “novelty” is [p215] more difficult to find than you would suppose. Artists like Ada Blanche, who inherit the talents of Madame Saqui and Blondin, have a right to repeat La Bruyère's melancholy words, “We have come too late.”

I have purposely given very little space in this book to former artists. The skill of our living gymnasts, acrobats, equestrians, and clowns, prevents our regretting the dead; but amongst the arts practised in the circus, that of the equilibrist has been in vogue longer than any other, and it is also the most limited in its resources.

It is therefore expedient, Saqui, to place your charming picture in this place, who forced the Great Emperor to raise his eyes to watch your aerial exploits, whom he called his _enragée_, whose chimerical daring he secretly admired for its [p216] resemblance to his own audacity. The astronomers of our time, less gallant than the ancient poets, have not yet placed you amidst the stars; yet, on the other hand, I fear that you have not been received into Paradise: for, little pagan, you once desecrated the sacred towers of Notre Dame with your little sabots. May this sin be remitted some day! I know, in one corner of Paris, an old centenarian Italian woman, who still has masses said for the repose of your restless soul, and believes that in expiation of your pride you are condemned to wander for two hundred years between heaven and earth, without any amusement except that of playing with the rainbow as a hoop when there is no storm.

The pleasant memory of this peri is closely allied with the name of Émile Gravelet, called Blondin. Is there any place in the world where the famous crossing of Niagara has not been spoken of? The two Americas hastened to see the feat, and every day Blondin added some novelty to his performance. Sometimes, seated on a little chair, he would cook an omelet upon his cord, and eat it amidst shouts of applause. Sometimes he took his son on his back and ran from one bank to the other. One day Blondin caught sight of the Prince of Wales amongst the spectators. He was presented to him, and proposed that the Prince should make the journey across the Falls with him. His Royal Highness alleged that his rank obliged him to remain on the

bank.

This offer was one of Blondin's favourite jokes.

Pierre Véron told me that on the day that the rope-dancer crossed the Seine he suggested to Cham, who had come to make a sketch, that he should cross with him. [p217]

"I am perfectly willing," replied the caricaturist, "but I will carry you on my back."

"Nonsense! Monsieur Cham, you cannot think of doing that!" [p218]

"You see you are the one to refuse," coolly answered the unsmiling jester.

The sudden discredit into which rope-dancing has fallen during the last few years dates from the appearance of Oceana.

This young woman, anxious to adopt a "novelty" which [p219] would exhibit her beauty without too much exertion, chose a wire, which, hanging slacker than the cord, enabled her, with a little oscillation, to assume the attitude of reclining in a hammock, the voluptuous indolent postures of Sarah la baigneuse. But the genuine rope-dancers at once determined to reproduce all the exercises of the cord upon the wire, which Oceana had so easily brought into fashion, and, with the exception of the horse-spring, they can all be performed upon it. The difficulty of preserving the equilibrium on a support that is even more unstable than the cord delighted the equilibrists.

A young Oriental, Lady Ibrahim, in the winter of 1888, at the Folies Bergère, showed us the advantages a clever equilibrist could derive from the flexibility of the wire.

A little too tall, with the almost thin arms of a dancer, she allowed herself to be raised by one hand to a rather high platform, from which she started, far above all heads. Once there, she opened a Chinese parasol, which she used as a balance; then, with a very serious expression, an anxious [p220] rigidity of the whole face, her eagle eyes fixed on the point of sight, she stepped upon the wire, which, brilliantly plated with nickel, looked like the slippery floor of a skating-rink under her feet. When she reached the centre of her wire, Lady Ibrahim caught a steel hoop in its flight; for one second she placed it behind her head; it was the starlit night: then she slipped it over her head, and slowly, with graceful precautions, she made it glide down the whole length of her [p221] body to her feet. Some flags arranged in a small wheel, so that their folds waved as she moved, afterwards replaced the parasol in her hand, and then,

suspended between the draperies of undulating silk, Lady Ibrahim violently swung herself from right to left on one leg; suddenly she closed her feet, raised herself in the air on the points of her toes, turned, and went towards the back *_croisé_*. The performance was crowned by a promenade on a plank balanced on the wire. Lady Ibrahim repeated upon the plank the various exercises that I have already described, until at last, amidst loud [p222] applause, she picked it up and carried it off upon her shoulder.

The wish to conquer increasing difficulties has raised the equilibrists from the slack wire to the trapeze. The danger of this work lies in the instability of the support. The slack wire and cord are less steady than the ball; the trapeze, although weighted by lumps of lead at the ends of the two cords, oscillates perceptibly more than the cord.

It is like a thoroughbred, a nervous, supple, and rebellious horse, which must be mounted with infinite care and delicacy of movement. Therefore the equilibrists who have once tried the trapeze will never abandon it. Through the meshes of their net they disdainfully look down upon the poor slack wire-dancers, who are with difficulty raised two yards above the sand of the arena by the *_croisés_*.

Globe, cord, slack wire, trapeze—this is the complete cycle, and we have already seen that these graceful exercises are performed chiefly by women. A man has not the same æsthetic reasons for exhibiting his body in a work which provides no use for his masculine strength, and he therefore rarely leaves the “carpet;” he is a *_ juggler_* or an *_antipodean_*. All the *_banquistes_* juggle, and all their children too. It is their leisure work between the exercises that exhaust their strength. They sit in a corner, pick up whatever is near their hands—a key, an orange, a stone—and throw them into the air. But daily practice is necessary before they can surpass the average skill and attain the dexterity which excites our wonder on the stage.

The true juggler, who is usually left-handed, never juggles on horseback, nor on a cord or trapeze; he performs with [p223] balls standing on the ground. This is a speciality of the Japanese. One was seen this winter in drawing-room performances whose dexterity approached sorcery. He only used a large white ball and a small red one, but in his hands they seemed like living things. They ran over his face, up [p224] and down his arms, and stopped on his nose or the tip of a finger.

Our friend Agoust was celebrated in America as a juggler before he became a comic clown and manager of the Nouveau Cirque. I have seen him juggle simultaneously with an egg, a ball, and a bottle of champagne; and this is a miraculous feat, through the difference in the muscular effort required in throwing back each object as it falls

into the juggler's hand.

The Dane Sévérus is also one of the present celebrities of carpet equilibrism. He appears on the stage like Hamlet, in a black velvet tunic. One expects him to commence the monologue spoken on the terrace of Elsinor. No. He orders a small velvet chair to be brought to him, and perches himself upon it head downwards, feet in air. But he has first balanced a lighted lamp, with its glass and globe, upon the nape of his neck. He then moves it forward upon his skull by tiny jerks of the skin of the hair. It reaches his forehead; from there it travels down his profile, and finally descends to his chest.

This Sévérus has made a speciality of juggling with fragile objects. He replaces balls and knives by basins, salad-bowls, lamp-glasses, and plates of all sizes. [p225] Whilst seeing his performance one cannot but regret having left the cook at home, instead of giving her one good lesson in the art of skilfully handling a dinner-service.

Sévérus has a remarkable iron arm. The biceps of the arm develop very strongly in jugglers, and the crural muscles attain an extraordinary expansion and strength in the antipodeans.

The banquistes use this term for the jugglers who work with their legs. For instance, the Japanese Yotshitaro and the Mexican Frank Maura.

I have seen Maura perform one of the most extraordinary bounds that I ever witnessed on the stage. It did not excite much applause from the audience, who little suspected the immense force of the exertion. Frank Maura knelt at the edge of the stage, seated himself upon his heels and crossed his arms, then, without assisting himself by one movement of the bust, by one effort of the loins he threw his body into the air, and did not return to the ground until he had completed the revolution of a dangerous somersault.

After seeing the performance of this antipodean, one can understand the wonderful vigour of his muscles.

Frank Maura places in the middle of the theatre a metal handle about two yards high, which supports a small saddle. The equilibrist balances his shoulders and nape upon it, and then raises both legs at a right angle. An assistant throws to him successively three enormous balls, a barrel, and a bench long enough to seat six persons. Maura catches these objects, throws them into the air, recatches them, passes them from his hands to his feet, turns them violently round and then suddenly stops their rotation from time to time. [p226] With this extraordinary strength the faculty of "prehension" is so curiously developed amongst antipodeans, that many of them can pick up a ball or an orange with their feet, and throw these objects, like

a projectile, towards a given mark.

We must add to the group of equilibrists two classes of acrobats, whose appearance in the Hippodrome dates from the grand spectacular pantomimes which rendered it necessary to cover the arena with a _parqueterie_ floor. These new comers are _bicyclists_ and _skaters_.

The bar used to guide the bicycle was certain to attract the attention of the equilibrists sooner or later, and we can understand how the idea suggested itself of reproducing upon this unsteady support some of the exercises which the gymnast performs upon the fixed bar. Since the number of these borrowed “acts” is necessarily very restricted, the wish to introduce variety into his “novelty act” led the bicyclist to add a companion to his [p228] performance, who springs upon his shoulders whilst he is in motion, and executes there some of the acrobatic feats which the pad equestrians perform in the _pas de deux_.

The summit of the limited performance possible on a bicycle is attained when the artists attempt on a _monocycle_ the exercises which are now frequently seen on the two wheels.

As for the skaters, they appear upon the _parqueterie_ in order to provoke laughter by their falls; their performance belongs to comic acrobatics.

You who in former days have tested the asphalte of the Skating Rink in the Rue Blanche, with your shoulders, back, and knees, are well acquainted with the horrible sprains which followed your attempts.

The clown-skaters have found means of avoiding those inconveniences by the suppleness of complete dislocation. At the same time they make great capital out of the natural perversity which impels us to laugh at our neighbours' falls. I shall not astonish you when I tell you that these comic equilibrists are looked down upon by “professionals.” They are held a little aloof, and are regarded as entertainers rather than artists. For they have not been forced to conquer an enemy in whose defeat lies all the glory of an equilibrist—the vertigo.

Can we say that the equilibrist is really victorious over the vertigo? After much observation I am convinced that it would be more accurate to write that the vertigo conquers the equilibrist.

You all know the experiment which plunges a hen into a state of immobility and renders it more or less completely [p230] insensible by placing its beak upon the ground and drawing a straight chalk line towards which its eyes forcibly converge. In the same way, if any one take a brilliant object between two fingers and hold it a few inches

from the eyes and a little above the forehead of a somewhat nervous person, first engaging him to look at it fixedly and to concentrate his attention on what follows, there is every chance of sending the person who is victim of the experiment into an hypnotic sleep.

The series of phenomena which then take place are familiar to all:

First, the eyes water a little through the fixed gaze, the pupils dilate and contract alternately, the members become extended, rigid, in some degree cataleptic. . .

Now recall the succession of acts which the equilibrist accomplishes in his work. He too, fixedly, obstinately gazes upon a single spot—the point of sight. All those who perform upon the cord have acknowledged that the same peculiar phenomena are produced at the end of the first seconds of this intense gaze; the equilibrist feels a sensation of absolute isolation, and at the same time a curious attrahent feeling towards the point of sight. In this nervous state the muscles assume a species of rigidity which assists the acrobat in his work.

Must we then conclude that the phenomena found here border upon hypnotism? This is a delicate question. I know that it will soon be laid before the Académie de Médecine by two clever savants of the Faculty of Montpellier. I commend these remarks to their attention, for they may feel some interest in them, owing to the difficulty which impedes close [p231] observation of these wandering artists, whose confidence is so hard to win.

Those who study this question of hypnotism amongst equilibrists should notice:

1. That as a rule they are female subjects,
2. That the most skilful equilibrists come to us from the land of the fakirs, from India, Japan, the East;
3. That all the European subjects that attain exceptional dexterity are at least neuropathic. [p232]

To quote but one instance: Erminia Chelli, the queen of equilibrists upon the trapeze, is a natural somnambulist.

From May till July, 1887, Paris possessed this charming [p233] young girl at the Cirque d'Été, and her departure has left us inconsolable.

I shall never forget the emotion which her performance caused me at our first meeting.

I at once begged M. Franconi to introduce me to her father.

M. Chelli and I exchanged cards.

I have copied the document here as an extraordinary monument of acrobatic and paternal pride:

EMILIO CHELLI,

EX-ARTIST, GYMNAST, AND CLOWN,

FATHER

OF THE CELEBRATED AERIAL EQUILIBRIST,

SIGNORINA ERMINA CHELLI.

The wife's card said "Madame Mère."

Erminia Chelli is not more than nineteen; she is a Venetian, and by lengthening her legs in the trapeze she has acquired the supreme grace in walking, the elegant proportions, which are usually rather lacking in Italians. The bust is youthful yet charming, the neck delicate; the little dark head is proudly carried upon shoulders which the trapeze has rendered supple without unduly developing the shoulder blades. Since the appearance of Oceana no one of such perfect proportions has been seen in either of the circuses or the Hippodrome. The beauty of Oceana was, perhaps, a little more individual and original; but Erminia is better bred and more typical. [p234]

"She is her father's pupil," Madame Chelli, her mother informed me, as she assisted Erminia in putting on a large pelisse. "She began to appear in public when she was quite a little girl. . . ."

[Illustration]

As she spoke an equestrian came in to tell them that the net was being prepared for Mademoiselle Chelli's performance.

Erminia threw off her mantle, and with the caressing tones [p235] of a young girl, a little seriously and gravely, she went up to her mother and put her arms round her neck:

"Addio, mamma," she said, kissing her.

A little surprised, I inquired:

"Is this a superstition, Madame Chelli?"

“No one knows,” the mother answered. “It has been her custom since childhood.”

Truly, in spite of the net extended beneath her, she might well be excused, poor little girl, for having one moment’s uneasiness whenever she was fetched for her dizzy work on the trapeze.

For one whole month I strained my neck watching her extraordinary performance in the friezes. Without the assistance of her hands, which she used as a counterpoise, she bent low enough to pick up with her teeth a handkerchief laid upon the trapeze. She mounted a ladder which was only poised upon the round oscillating piece of wood. Lastly, she balanced an immense ball still upon this frail support, and then, without leaning upon anything, she mounted upon it. And thus, lost in space, the globe beneath her feet, she seemed, the little acrobat, so beautiful, so unconscious of danger, like a goddess travelling through the air with the earth for a movable pedestal.

The enthusiasm with which I had praised the beauty and talents of Erminia Chelli in several newspapers procured for me at that time the letter which I reproduce here with great pleasure. It is from a literary man, and throws a genuine light upon the customs of some of those acrobats who as a class are so misunderstood by the public.
[p236]

“SIR,

“The article in which you allude to Mademoiselle Chelli recalls to me a souvenir which I have much pleasure in relating to you.

“Three or four years ago the Chelli family came to Vichy and took part in the performances at the Eden Theatre. The father went through some acts of strength and equilibrium; the daughter was commencing on the flying trapeze the work for which she is now distinguished. The mother watched them both, admired them, and trembled.

“At that time the child, who might have been fourteen years old, already placed a ball upon a movable trapeze, steadied it as far as possible with her feet whilst holding by the cords, then loosening her grasp of the cords, she rose, bowed, stood upon one foot, and threw kisses to the crowd, visibly directing some of them towards her mother, who usually occupied the second chair in the second row of the orchestra stalls; the first chair being reserved for the child, who came back to her mother as soon as her performance was over.

“My usual place was in the first chair in the first row. I soon began to talk to the mother and her daughter, whose modest manners and childish affection for her parent were perfectly free from all affectation, and attracted me immensely.

“One evening I ordered a bouquet to be thrown to Erminia as she left the trapeze. On the following day I asked her mother if this attention, which the audience warmly applauded, had pleased her daughter.

““Oh! yes,’ she said, ‘and this morning Erminia carried it to the Virgin’s chapel.’ [p237]

[Illustration]

““She is pious, then?’

““Certainly; it is only a fortnight since she received the communion; she often communicates.’ [p238]

“I will not point out the contrast which presents itself to the mind. There are some facts like the drop of water, in which, as Mademoiselle de Gournay has already said, the whole sun is reflected.

“Poor child! has she travelled so far in safety on the rough voyage of the life which she leads? I hope so; it is the sincere wish of an old and unknown friend.

“C. LIVET.”

The “old and unknown friend” of Erminia Chelli may feel reassured. I have eaten macaroni in the society of Mademoiselle Erminia and her family, and since her departure from France we live in the friendly intercourse of letters: the pretty equilibrist is still just the same as when he knew her. The horse filled the thoughts of poor Émilie Loisset, and so the trapeze fills the whole life of Erminia Chelli. It is her vocation; when quite small she would go under the table and swing her dolls upon a trapeze made of a hairpin and the elastic from her hair net. And, on the other hand, whenever she is not in the circus she passes her time in making bonnets for herself and her friends. This talent for millinery replaces Ingres’ violin. One has much more chance of pleasing her by saying, “How becoming your bonnet is, Erminia!” than by complimenting her upon her talent as an equilibrist.

Erminia is likely to amass a very large dowry. Do you know that £120 per month may be earned by walking head downwards upon the ceiling of a circus? In four or five years’ time she will marry. [p239]

“But there is no hurry,” she said, shaking her head, when some one mentioned this contingency to her.

She was right. The sight of her youthful form flying through the friezes is a delight to those pagans who appreciate pure curved lines, and it is also a subject for meditation to those philosophers to whom the little acrobat unconsciously gives a symbolic lesson when she has exhausted in an ascending [p240] scale of difficulties all the most unexpected combinations of equilibrist art, upright upon her globe, supported by the trapeze only, she pauses, and upon this vantage point of unsurpassable perfection, feeling sure that nothing more is possible, she smiles, sends a kiss from the tip of her fingers to her admirers, then abruptly, as though struck by lightning, she falls into the net.

VAGUE THOUGHTS ON ART

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It was on a day of rare beauty that I went out into the fields to try and gather these few thoughts. So golden and sweetly hot it was, that they came lazily, and with a flight no more coherent or responsible than the swoop of the very swallows; and, as in a play or poem, the result is conditioned by the conceiving mood, so I knew would be the nature of my diving, dipping, pale-throated, fork-tailed words. But, after all--I thought, sitting there--I need not take my critical pronouncements seriously. I have not the firm soul of the critic. It is not my profession to know 'things for certain, and to make others feel that certainty. On the contrary, I am often wrong--a luxury no critic can afford. And so, invading as I was the realm of others, I advanced with a light pen, feeling that none, and least of all myself, need expect me to be right.

What then--I thought--is Art? For I perceived that to think about it I must first define it; and I almost stopped thinking at all before the fearsome nature of that task. Then slowly in my mind gathered this group of words:

Art is that imaginative expression of human energy, which, through technical concretion of feeling and perception, tends to reconcile the individual with the universal, by exciting in him impersonal emotion. And the greatest Art is that which excites the greatest impersonal emotion in an hypothecated perfect human being.

Impersonal emotion! And what--I thought do I mean by that? Surely I mean: That is not Art, which, while I, am contemplating it, inspires me with any active or directive impulse; that is Art, when, for however brief a moment, it replaces within me interest in myself by interest in itself. For, let me suppose myself in the presence of a carved marble bath. If my thoughts be "What could I buy that for?" Impulse of acquisition; or: "From what quarry did it come?" Impulse of inquiry; or: "Which would be the right end for my head?" Mixed impulse of inquiry and acquisition--I am at that moment insensible to it as a work of Art. But, if I stand before it vibrating at sight of its colour and forms, if ever so little and for ever so short a time, unhaunted by any definite practical thought or impulse--to that extent and for that moment it has stolen me away out of myself and put itself there instead; has linked me to the universal by making me forget the individual in me. And for that moment, and only while that moment lasts, it is to me a work of Art. The word "impersonal," then, is but used in this my definition to signify momentary forgetfulness of one's own personality and its active wants.

So Art--I thought--is that which, heard, read, or looked on, while producing no directive impulse, warms one with unconscious vibration. Nor can I imagine any means of defining what is the greatest Art, without hypothecating a perfect human being. But since we shall never see, or know if we do see, that desirable creature--dogmatism is banished, "Academy" is dead to the discussion, deader than even Tolstoy left it after his famous treatise "What is Art?" For, having destroyed all the old Judges and Academies, Tolstoy, by saying that the greatest Art was that which appealed to the greatest number of living human beings, raised up the masses of mankind to be a definite new Judge or Academy, as tyrannical and narrow as ever were those whom he had destroyed.

This, at all events--I thought is as far as I dare go in defining what Art is. But let me try to make plain to myself what is the essential quality that gives to Art the power of exciting this unconscious vibration, this impersonal emotion. It has been called Beauty! An awkward word--a perpetual begging of the question; too current in use, too ambiguous altogether; now too narrow, now too wide--a word, in fact, too glib to know at all what it means. And how dangerous a word--often misleading us into slabbing with extraneous floridities what would otherwise, on its own plane, be Art! To be decorative where decoration is not suitable, to be lyrical where lyricism is out of place, is assuredly to spoil Art, not to achieve it. But this essential quality of Art has also, and more happily, been called Rhythm. And, what is Rhythm if not that mysterious harmony between part and part, and part and whole, which gives what is called life; that exact proportion, the mystery of which is best grasped in observing how life leaves an animate creature when the essential relation of part to whole has been sufficiently disturbed. And I agree that this rhythmic relation of part to part, and part to whole--in short, vitality--is the one quality inseparable from a work of Art. For nothing which does not seem to a man possessed of this rhythmic vitality, can ever steal him out of himself.

And having got thus far in my thoughts, I paused, watching the swallows; for they seemed to me the symbol, in their swift, sure curvetting, all daring and balance and surprise, of the delicate poise and motion of Art, that visits no two men alike, in a world where no two things of all the things there be, are quite the same.

Yes--I thought--and this Art is the one form of human energy in the whole world, which really works for union, and destroys the barriers between man and man. It is the continual, unconscious replacement, however fleeting, of oneself by another; the real cement of human life; the everlasting refreshment and renewal. For, what is grievous, dompting, grim, about our lives is that we are shut up within ourselves, with an itch to get outside ourselves. And to be stolen away from ourselves by Art is a momentary relaxation from that itching, a minute's profound, and as it were secret, enfranchisement. The active amusements and relaxations of life can only rest certain of our faculties, by indulging others; the

whole self is never rested save through that unconsciousness of self, which comes through rapt contemplation of Nature or of Art.

And suddenly I remembered that some believe that Art does not produce unconsciousness of self, but rather very vivid self-realisation.

Ah! but--I thought--that is not the first and instant effect of Art; the new impetus is the after effect of that momentary replacement of oneself by the self of the work before us; it is surely the result of that brief span of enlargement, enfranchisement, and rest.

Yes, Art is the great and universal refreshment. For Art is never dogmatic; holds no brief for itself you may take it or you may leave it. It does not force itself rudely where it is not wanted. It is reverent to all tempers, to all points of view. But it is wilful--the very wind in the comings and goings of its influence, an uncapturable fugitive, visiting our hearts at vagrant, sweet moments; since we often stand even before the greatest works of Art without being able quite to lose ourselves! That restful oblivion comes, we never quite know when--and it is gone! But when it comes, it is a spirit hovering with cool wings, blessing us from least to greatest, according to our powers; a spirit deathless and varied as human life itself.

And in what sort of age--I thought--are artists living now? Are conditions favourable? Life is very multiple; full of "movements," "facts," and "news"; with the limelight terribly turned on--and all this is adverse to the artist. Yet, leisure is abundant; the facilities for study great; Liberty is respected--more or less. But, there is one great reason why, in this age of ours, Art, it seems, must flourish. For, just as cross-breeding in Nature--if it be not too violent--often gives an extra vitality to the offspring, so does cross-breeding of philosophies make for vitality in Art. I cannot help thinking that historians, looking back from the far future, will record this age as the Third Renaissance. We who are lost in it, working or looking on, can neither tell what we are doing, nor where standing; but we cannot help observing, that, just as in the Greek Renaissance, worn-out Pagan orthodoxy was penetrated by new philosophy; just as in the Italian Renaissance, Pagan philosophy, reasserting itself, fertilised again an already too inbred Christian creed; so now Orthodoxy fertilised by Science is producing a fresh and fuller conception of life--a love of Perfection, not for hope of reward, not for fear of punishment, but for Perfection's sake. Slowly, under our feet, beneath our consciousness, is forming that new philosophy, and it is in times of new philosophies that Art, itself in essence always a discovery, must flourish. Those whose sacred suns and moons are ever in the past, tell us that our Art is going to the dogs; and it is, indeed, true that we are in confusion! The waters are broken, and every nerve and sinew of the artist is strained to discover his own safety. It is an age of stir and change, a season of new wine and old bottles. Yet, assuredly, in spite of breakages and waste, a wine worth

the drinking is all the time being made.

I ceased again to think, for the sun had dipped low, and the midges were biting me; and the sounds of evening had begun, those innumerable far-travelling sounds of man and bird and beast--so clear and intimate--of remote countrysides at sunset. And for long I listened, too vague to move my pen.

New philosophy--a vigorous Art! Are there not all the signs of it? In music, sculpture, painting; in fiction--and drama; in dancing; in criticism itself, if criticism be an Art. Yes, we are reaching out to a new faith not yet crystallised, to a new Art not yet perfected; the forms still to find--the flowers still to fashion!

And how has it come, this slowly growing faith in Perfection for Perfection's sake? Surely like this: The Western world awoke one day to find that it no longer believed corporately and for certain in future life for the individual consciousness. It began to feel: I cannot say more than that there may be--Death may be the end of man, or Death may be nothing. And it began to ask itself in this uncertainty: Do I then desire to go on living? Now, since it found that it desired to go on living at least as earnestly as ever it did before, it began to inquire why. And slowly it perceived that there was, inborn within it, a passionate instinct of which it had hardly till then been conscious--a sacred instinct to perfect itself, now, as well as in a possible hereafter; to perfect itself because Perfection was desirable, a vision to be adored, and striven for; a dream motive fastened within the Universe; the very essential Cause of everything. And it began to see that this Perfection, cosmically, was nothing but perfect Equanimity and Harmony; and in human relations, nothing but perfect Love and Justice. And Perfection began to glow before the eyes of the Western world like a new star, whose light touched with glamour all things as they came forth from Mystery, till to Mystery they were ready to return.

This--I thought is surely what the Western world has dimly been rediscovering. There has crept into our minds once more the feeling that the Universe is all of a piece, Equipoise supreme; and all things equally wonderful, and mysterious, and valuable. We have begun, in fact, to have a glimmering of the artist's creed, that nothing may we despise or neglect--that everything is worth the doing well, the making fair--that our God, Perfection, is implicit everywhere, and the revelation of Him the business of our Art.

And as I jotted down these words I noticed that some real stars had crept up into the sky, so gradually darkening above the pollard lime-trees; cuckoos, who had been calling on the thorn-trees all the afternoon, were silent; the swallows no longer flirted past, but a bat was already in career over the holly hedge; and round me the buttercups were closing. The whole form and feeling of the world had changed, so that I seemed to

have before me a new picture hanging.

Ah! I thought Art must indeed be priest of this new faith in Perfection, whose motto is: "Harmony, Proportion, Balance." For by Art alone can true harmony in human affairs be fostered, true Proportion revealed, and true Equipoise preserved. Is not the training of an artist a training in the due relation of one thing with another, and in the faculty of expressing that relation clearly; and, even more, a training in the faculty of disengaging from self the very essence of self--and passing that essence into other selves by so delicate means that none shall see how it is done, yet be insensibly unified? Is not the artist, of all men, foe and nullifier of partisanship and parochialism, of distortions and extravagance, the discoverer of that jack-o'-lantern--Truth; for, if Truth be not Spiritual Proportion I know not what it is. Truth it seems to me--is no absolute thing, but always relative, the essential symmetry in the varying relationships of life; and the most perfect truth is but the concrete expression of the most penetrating vision. Life seen throughout as a countless show of the finest works of Art; Life shaped, and purged of the irrelevant, the gross, and the extravagant; Life, as it were, spiritually selected--that is Truth; a thing as multiple, and changing, as subtle, and strange, as Life itself, and as little to be bound by dogma. Truth admits but the one rule: No deficiency, and no excess! Disobedient to that rule--nothing attains full vitality. And secretly fettered by that rule is Art, whose business is the creation of vital things.

That aesthete, to be sure, was right, when he said: "It is Style that makes one believe in a thing; nothing but Style." For, what is Style in its true and broadest sense save fidelity to idea and mood, and perfect balance in the clothing of them? And I thought: Can one believe in the decadence of Art in an age which, however unconsciously as yet, is beginning to worship that which Art worships--Perfection-Style?

The faults of our Arts to-day are the faults of zeal and of adventure, the faults and crudities of pioneers, the errors and mishaps of the explorer. They must pass through many fevers, and many times lose their way; but at all events they shall not go dying in their beds, and be buried at Kensal Green. And, here and there, amid the disasters and wreckage of their voyages of discovery, they will find something new, some fresh way of embellishing life, or of revealing the heart of things. That characteristic of to-day's Art--the striving of each branch of Art to burst its own boundaries--which to many spells destruction, is surely of happy omen. The novel straining to become the play, the play the novel, both trying to paint; music striving to become story; poetry gasping to be music; painting panting to be philosophy; forms, canons, rules, all melting in the pot; stagnation broken up! In all this havoc there is much to shock and jar even the most eager and adventurous. We cannot stand these new-fangled fellows! They have no form! They rush in where angels fear to tread. They have lost all the good of the old, and

given us nothing in its place! And yet--only out of stir and change is born new salvation. To deny that is to deny belief in man, to turn our backs on courage! It is well, indeed, that some should live in closed studies with the paintings and the books of yesterday--such devoted students serve Art in their own way. But the fresh-air world will ever want new forms. We shall not get them without faith enough to risk the old! The good will live, the bad will die; and tomorrow only can tell us which is which!

Yes--I thought--we naturally take a too impatient view of the Art of our own time, since we can neither see the ends toward which it is almost blindly groping, nor the few perfected creations that will be left standing amidst the rubble of abortive effort. An age must always decry itself and extol its forbears. The unwritten history of every Art will show us that. Consider the novel--that most recent form of Art! Did not the age which followed Fielding lament the treachery of authors to the Picaresque tradition, complaining that they were not as Fielding and Smollett were? Be sure they did. Very slowly and in spite of opposition did the novel attain in this country the fulness of that biographical form achieved under Thackeray. Very slowly, and in face of condemnation, it has been losing that form in favour of a greater vividness which places before the reader's brain, not historical statements, as it were, of motives and of facts, but word-paintings of things and persons, so chosen and arranged that the reader may see, as if at first hand, the spirit of Life at work before him. The new novel has as many bemoaners as the old novel had when it was new. It is no question of better or worse, but of differing forms--of change dictated by gradual suitability to the changing conditions of our social life, and to the ever fresh discoveries of craftsmen, in the intoxication of which, old and equally worthy craftsmanship is--by the way--too often for the moment mislaid. The vested interests of life favour the line of least resistance--disliking and revolting against disturbance; but one must always remember that a spurious glamour is inclined to gather around what is new. And, because of these two deflecting factors, those who break through old forms must well expect to be dead before the new forms they have unconsciously created have found their true level, high or low, in the world of Art. When a thing is new how shall it be judged? In the fluster of meeting novelty, we have even seen coherence attempting to bind together two personalities so fundamentally opposed as those of Ibsen and Bernard Shaw dramatists with hardly a quality in common; no identity of tradition, or belief; not the faintest resemblance in methods of construction or technique. Yet contemporary estimate talks of them often in the same breath. They are new! It is enough. And others, as utterly unlike them both. They too are new. They have as yet no label of their own then put on some one else's!

And so--I thought it must always be; for Time is essential to the proper placing and estimate of all Art. And is it not this feeling, that contemporary judgments are apt to turn out a little ludicrous, which has

converted much criticism of late from judgment pronounced into impression recorded--recreative statement--a kind, in fact, of expression of the critic's self, elicited through contemplation of a book, a play, a symphony, a picture? For this kind of criticism there has even recently been claimed an actual identity with creation. Esthetic judgment and creative power identical! That is a hard saying. For, however sympathetic one may feel toward this new criticism, however one may recognise that the recording of impression has a wider, more elastic, and more lasting value than the delivery of arbitrary judgment based on rigid laws of taste; however one may admit that it approaches the creative gift in so far as it demands the qualities of receptivity and reproduction--is there not still lacking to this "new" critic something of that thirsting spirit of discovery, which precedes the creation--hitherto so-called--of anything? Criticism, taste, aesthetic judgment, by the very nature of their task, wait till life has been focussed by the artists before they attempt to reproduce the image which that imprisoned fragment of life makes on the mirror of their minds. But a thing created springs from a germ unconsciously implanted by the direct impact of unfettered life on the whole range, of the creator's temperament; and round the germ thus engendered, the creative artist--ever penetrating, discovering, selecting--goes on building cell on cell, gathered from a million little fresh impacts and visions. And to say that this is also exactly what the recreative critic does, is to say that the interpretative musician is creator in the same sense as is the composer of the music that he interprets. If, indeed, these processes be the same in kind, they are in degree so far apart that one would think the word creative unfortunately used of both....

But this speculation--I thought--is going beyond the bounds of vagueness. Let there be some thread of coherence in your thoughts, as there is in the progress of this evening, fast fading into night. Return to the consideration of the nature and purposes of Art! And recognize that much of what you have thought will seem on the face of it heresy to the school whose doctrine was incarnated by Oscar Wilde in that admirable apotheosis of half-truths: "The Decay of the Art of Lying." For therein he said: "No great artist ever sees things as they really are." Yet, that half-truth might also be put thus: The seeing of things as they really are--the seeing of a proportion veiled from other eyes (together with the power of expression), is what makes a man an artist. What makes him a great artist is a high fervour of spirit, which produces a superlative, instead of a comparative, clarity of vision.

Close to my house there is a group of pines with gnarled red limbs flanked by beech-trees. And there is often a very deep blue sky behind. Generally, that is all I see. But, once in a way, in those trees against that sky I seem to see all the passionate life and glow that Titian painted into his pagan pictures. I have a vision of mysterious meaning, of a mysterious relation between that sky and those trees with their gnarled red limbs and Life as I know it. And when I have had that vision

I always feel, this is reality, and all those other times, when I have no such vision, simple unreality. If I were a painter, it is for such fervent vision I should wait, before moving brush: This, so intimate, inner vision of reality, indeed, seems in duller moments well-nigh grotesque; and hence that other glib half-truth: "Art is greater than Life itself." Art is, indeed, greater than Life in the sense that the power of Art is the disengagement from Life of its real spirit and significance. But in any other sense, to say that Art is greater than Life from which it emerges, and into which it must remerge, can but suspend the artist over Life, with his feet in the air and his head in the clouds--Prig masquerading as Demi-god. "Nature is no great Mother who has borne us. She is our creation. It is in our brain that she quickens to life." Such is the highest hyperbole of the aesthetic creed. But what is creative instinct, if not an incessant living sympathy with Nature, a constant craving like that of Nature's own, to fashion something new out of all that comes within the grasp of those faculties with which Nature has endowed us? The qualities of vision, of fancy, and of imaginative power, are no more divorced from Nature, than are the qualities of common-sense and courage. They are rarer, that is all. But in truth, no one holds such views. Not even those who utter them. They are the rhetoric, the over-statement of half-truths, by such as wish to condemn what they call "Realism," without being temperamentally capable of understanding what "Realism" really is.

And what--I thought--is Realism? What is the meaning of that word so wildly used? Is it descriptive of technique, or descriptive of the spirit of the artist; or both, or neither? Was Turgenev a realist? No greater poet ever wrote in prose, nor any one who more closely brought the actual shapes of men and things before us. No more fervent idealists than Ibsen and Tolstoy ever lived; and none more careful to make their people real. Were they realists? No more deeply fantastic writer can I conceive than Dostoevsky, nor any who has described actual situations more vividly. Was he a realist? The late Stephen Crane was called a realist. Than whom no more impressionistic writer ever painted with words. What then is the heart of this term still often used as an expression almost of abuse? To me, at all events--I thought--the words realism, realistic, have no longer reference to technique, for which the words naturalism, naturalistic, serve far better. Nor have they to do with the question of imaginative power--as much demanded by realism as by romanticism. For me, a realist is by no means tied to naturalistic technique--he may be poetic, idealistic, fantastic, impressionistic, anything but--romantic; that, in so far as he is a realist, he cannot be. The word, in fact, characterises that artist whose temperamental preoccupation is with revelation of the actual inter-relating spirit of life, character, and thought, with a view to enlighten himself and others; as distinguished from that artist whom I call romantic--whose temperamental purpose is invention of tale or design with a view to delight himself and others. It is a question of temperamental antecedent motive in the artist, and nothing more.

Realist--Romanticist! Enlightenment--Delight! That is the true apposition. To make a revelation--to tell a fairy-tale! And either of these artists may use what form he likes--naturalistic, fantastic, poetic, impressionistic. For it is not by the form, but by the purpose and mood of his art that he shall be known, as one or as the other. Realists indeed--including the half of Shakespeare that was realist not being primarily concerned to amuse their audience, are still comparatively unpopular in a world made up for the greater part of men of action, who instinctively reject all art that does not distract them without causing them to think. For thought makes demands on an energy already in full use; thought causes introspection; and introspection causes discomfort, and disturbs the grooves of action. To say that the object of the realist is to enlighten rather than to delight, is not to say that in his art the realist is not amusing himself as much as ever is the teller of a fairy-tale, though he does not deliberately start out to do so; he is amusing, too, a large part of mankind. For, admitted that the object, and the test of Art, is always the awakening of vibration, of impersonal emotion, it is still usually forgotten that men fall, roughly speaking, into two flocks: Those whose intelligence is uninquiring in the face of Art, and does not demand to be appeased before their emotions can be stirred; and those who, having a speculative bent of mind, must first be satisfied by an enlightening quality in a work of Art, before that work of Art can awaken in them feeling. The audience of the realist is drawn from this latter type of man; the much larger audience of the romantic artist from the former; together with, in both cases, those fastidious few for whom all Art is style and only style, and who welcome either kind, so long as it is good enough.

To me, then--I thought--this division into Realism and Romance, so understood, is the main cleavage in all the Arts; but it is hard to find pure examples of either kind. For even the most determined realist has more than a streak in him of the romanticist, and the most resolute romanticist finds it impossible at times to be quite unreal. Guido Reni, Watteau, Leighton were they not perhaps somewhat pure romanticists; Rembrandt, Hogarth, Manet mainly realists; Botticelli, Titian, Raphael, a blend. Dumas pere, and Scott, surely romantic; Flaubert and Tolstoy as surely realists; Dickens and Cervantes, blended. Keats and Swinburne romantic; Browning and Whitman--realistic; Shakespeare and Goethe, both. The Greek dramatists--realists. The Arabian Nights and Malory romantic. The Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Old Testament, both realism and romance. And if in the vagueness of my thoughts I were to seek for illustration less general and vague to show the essence of this temperamental cleavage in all Art, I would take the two novelists Turgenev and Stevenson. For Turgenev expressed himself in stories that must be called romances, and Stevenson employed almost always a naturalistic technique. Yet no one would ever call Turgenev a romanticist, or Stevenson a realist. The spirit of the first brooded over life, found in it a perpetual voyage of spiritual adventure, was set on discovering and making clear to himself

and all, the varying traits and emotions of human character--the varying moods of Nature; and though he couched all this discovery in caskets of engaging story, it was always clear as day what mood it was that drove him to dip pen in ink. The spirit of the second, I think, almost dreaded to discover; he felt life, I believe, too keenly to want to probe into it; he spun his gossamer to lure himself and all away from life. That was his driving mood; but the craftsman in him, longing to be clear and poignant, made him more natural, more actual than most realists.

So, how thin often is the hedge! And how poor a business the partisan abuse of either kind of art in a world where each sort of mind has full right to its own due expression, and grumbling lawful only when due expression is not attained. One may not care for a Rembrandt portrait of a plain old woman; a graceful Watteau decoration may leave another cold but foolish will he be who denies that both are faithful to their conceiving moods, and so proportioned part to part, and part to whole, as to have, each in its own way, that inherent rhythm or vitality which is the hall-mark of Art. He is but a poor philosopher who holds a view so narrow as to exclude forms not to his personal taste. No realist can love romantic Art so much as he loves his own, but when that Art fulfils the laws of its peculiar being, if he would be no blind partisan, he must admit it. The romanticist will never be amused by realism, but let him not for that reason be so parochial as to think that realism, when it achieves vitality, is not Art. For what is Art but the perfected expression of self in contact with the world; and whether that self be of enlightening, or of fairy-telling temperament, is of no moment whatsoever. The tossing of abuse from realist to romanticist and back is but the sword-play of two one-eyed men with their blind side turned toward each other. Shall not each attempt be judged on its own merits? If found not shoddy, faked, or forced, but true to itself, true to its conceiving mood, and fair-proportioned part to whole; so that it lives--then, realistic or romantic, in the name of Fairness let it pass! Of all kinds of human energy, Art is surely the most free, the least parochial; and demands of us an essential tolerance of all its forms. Shall we waste breath and ink in condemnation of artists, because their temperaments are not our own?

But the shapes and colours of the day were now all blurred; every tree and stone entangled in the dusk. How different the world seemed from that in which I had first sat down, with the swallows flirting past. And my mood was different; for each of those worlds had brought to my heart its proper feeling--painted on my eyes the just picture. And Night, that was coming, would bring me yet another mood that would frame itself with consciousness at its own fair moment, and hang before me. A quiet owl stole by in the geld below, and vanished into the heart of a tree. And suddenly above the moor-line I saw the large moon rising. Cinnamon-coloured, it made all things swim, made me uncertain of my thoughts, vague with mazy feeling. Shapes seemed but drifts of moon-dust, and true reality nothing save a sort of still listening to the wind. And

for long I sat, just watching the moon creep up, and hearing the thin, dry rustle of the leaves along the holly hedge. And there came to me this thought: What is this Universe--that never had beginning and will never have an end--but a myriad striving to perfect pictures never the same, so blending and fading one into another, that all form one great perfected picture? And what are we--ripples on the tides of a birthless, deathless, equipoised Creative-Purpose--but little works of Art?

Trying to record that thought, I noticed that my note-book was damp with dew. The cattle were lying down. It was too dark to see.

1911

READING BOOKS

&

HEARING MUSIC

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The chief point to be made in this matter is: that books, to fulfil their purpose, do not always require to be read. A book, for instance, which is a present, or an "hommage de l'auteur," has already served its purpose, like a visiting-card or a luggage label, at best like a ceremonial bouquet; and it is absurd to try and make it serve twice over, by reading it. The same applies, of course, to books lent without being asked for, and, in a still higher degree, to a book which has been discussed in society, and thus furnished out a due amount of conversation; to read such a book is an act of pedantry, showing slavishness to the names of things, and lack of insight into their real nature, which is revealed by the function they have been able to perform. Fancy, if public characters had to learn to snuff--a practice happily abandoned--because they occasionally received gifts of enamelled snuffboxes from foreign potentates!

But there are subtler sides to this subject, and it is of these I fain would speak. We are apt to blunt our literary sense by reading far too much, and to lessen our capacity for getting the great delights from books by making reading into a routine and a drudgery. Of course I know that reading books has its utilitarian side, and that we have to consider printed matter (let me never call it literature!) as the raw material whence we extract some of the information necessary to life. But long familiarity with an illiterate peasantry like the Italian one, inclines me to think that we grossly exaggerate the need of such book-grown knowledge. Except as regards scientific facts and the various practices--as medicine, engineering, and the like, founded on them--such knowledge is really very little connected with life, either practical or spiritual, and it is possible to act, to feel, and even to think and to express one's self with propriety and grace, while having simply no literature at all behind one. That this is really no paradox is proved by pointing to the Greeks, who, even in the time of Plato--let alone the time, whenever that was, of Homer--had not much more knowledge of books than my Italian servant, who knows a few scraps of Tasso, possesses a "Book of Dreams; or Key to the Lottery," and uses the literature I have foolishly bestowed upon him as blotters in which to keep loose bills, and wherein occasionally to do addition sums. So that the fact seems to be that reading books is useful chiefly to enable us to wish to read more books!

How many times does one not feel checked, when on the point of lending a book to what we call uneducated persons, by wondering what earthly

texture of misapprehension and blanks they will weave out of its allusions and suggestions? And the same is the case of children. What fitter reading for a tall Greek goddess of ten than the tale of Cupid and Psyche, the most perfect of fairy stories with us; wicked sisters, subterranean adventures, ants helping to sort seeds, and terrible awaking drops of hot oil spilt over the bridegroom? But when I read to her this afternoon, shall I not see quite plainly over the edge of the book, that all the things which make it just what it is to me--the indescribable quality of the South, of antiquity and paganism--are utterly missed out; and that, to this divine young nymph, "Cupid and Psyche" is distinguishable from, say, "Beauty and the Beast" only by the unnecessary addition of a lot of heathenish names and the words which she does not even want to understand? Hence literature, alas! is, so to speak, for the literate; and one has to have read a great, great deal in order to taste the special exquisiteness of books, their marvellous essence of long-stored up, oddly mixed, subtly selected and hundredfold distilled suggestion.

But once this state of things reached, there is no need to read much; and every reason for not _keeping up_, as vain and foolish persons boast, "with literature." Since, the time has come, after planting and grafting and dragging watering-pots, for flowering and fruition; for books to do their best, to exert their full magic. This is the time when a verse, imperfectly remembered, will haunt the memory; and one takes down the book, reads it and what follows, judiciously breaking off, one's mind full of the flavour and scent. Or, again, talking with a friend, a certain passage of prose--the account of the Lambs going to the play when young, or the beginning of "Urn Burial," or a chapter (with due improvised skippings) of "Candide"--comes up in conversation; and one reads it rejoicing with one's friends, feeling the special rapture of united comprehension, of mind touching mind, like the little thrill of voice touching voice on the resolving sevenths of the old duets in thirds. Or even when, remembering some graver page--say the dedication of "Faust" to Goethe's dead contemporaries--one fetches the book and reaches it silently to the other one, not daring to read it out loud.... It is when these things happen that one is really getting the good of books; and that one feels that there really is something astonishing and mysterious in words taken out of the dictionary and arranged with commas and semicolons and full stops between them.

The greatest pleasures of reading consist in re-reading. Sometimes almost in not reading at all, but just thinking or feeling what there is inside the book, or what has come out of it, long ago, and passed into one's mind or heart, as the case may be. I wish to record in this reference a happy week once passed, at vintage time, in the Lower Apennines, with a beautiful copy of "Hippolytus," bound in white, which had been given me, regardless of my ignorance of Greek, by my dear Lombard friend who resembles a faun. I carried it about in my pocket; sometimes, at rare intervals, spelling out some word in _mai_ or in

totos, and casting a glance on the interleaved crib; but more often letting the volume repose by me on the grass and crushed mint of the cool yard under the fig tree, while the last belated cicada sawed, and the wild bees hummed in the ivy flower of the old villa wall. For once you know the spirit of a book, there is a process (known to Petrarch with reference to Homer, whom he was unable to understand) of taking in its charm by merely turning over the pages, or even, as I say, in carrying it about. The literary essence, which is uncommonly subtle, has various modes of acting on us; and this particular manner of absorbing a book's spirit stands to the material operation called _reading_, much in the same way that _smell_, the act of breathing invisible volatile particles, stands to the more obvious wholesale process of _taste_.

Nay, such is the virtuous power of books, that, to those who are initiated and reverent, it can act from the mere title, or more properly, the binding. Of this I had an instance quite lately in the library of an old Jacobite house on the North Tyne. This library contained, besides its properly embodied books, a small collection existing, so to speak, only in the spirit, or at least in effigy; a door, to wit, being covered with real book-backs, or, more properly, backs of real books of which the inside was missing. A quaint, delightful collection! "Female traits," two volumes; four volumes (what dinners and breakfasts, as well as suppers, of horrors!) of Webster's "Vittoria Corombona," etc., the "Siege of Mons," "Ancient Mysteries," "The Epigrams of Martial," "A Journey through Italy," and Crébillon's novels. Contemplating these pseudo shelves of pageless tomes, I felt acutely how true it is that a book (for the truly lettered) can do its work without being read. I lingeringly relished (why did not Johnson give us a verb to _saporate_?) this mixed literature's flavour, humorous, romantic, and pedantic, beautifully welded. And I recognized that those gutted-away insides were quite superfluous: they had yielded their essence and their virtue.

HEARING MUSIC

"Heard melodies," said Keats, "are sweet; but those unheard are sweeter." The remark is not encouraging to performers, yet, saving their displeasure, there is some truth in it.

We give too much importance, nowadays, being busy and idle and mercantile (compatible qualities, alas!) to the material presence of everything, its power of filling time or space, and particularly of becoming an item of our budget; forgetful that of the very best things the material presence is worthless save as first step to a spiritual existence within our soul. This is particularly the case with music.

There is nothing in the realm of sound at all corresponding to the actual photographing of a visible object on the retina; our auditive apparatus, whatever its mysteries, gives no sign of being in any way of the nature of a phonograph. Moreover, one element of music is certainly due to the sense of locomotion, the _rhythm_; so that _sound_, to become music, requires the attention of something more than the mere ear. Nay, it would seem, despite the contrary assertion of the learned _Stumpf_, that the greater number of writers on the vexed science of sound incline to believe that the hearing of music is always attended with movements, however imperceptible, in the throat, which, being true, would prove that, in a fashion, we _perform_ the melodies which we think we only _hear_; living echoes, nerves vibrating beneath the composer's touch as literally as does the string of the fiddle, or its wooden fibres. A very delicate instrument this, called the _Hearer_, and, as we all know, more liable to being out of tune, to refusing to act altogether, than any instrument (fortunately for performers) hitherto made by the hand of man. Thus, in a way, one might paraphrase the answer which Mme. Gabbrielli is said to have made to the Empress Catherine, "Your Majesty's policemen can make me _scream_, not _sing_!" and say to some queen of piano keys or emperor of _ut de poitrine_ that there is no violence or blandishment which can secure the _inner ear_, however much the outer ear may be solicited or bullied.

'Tis in this sense, methinks, that we should understand the saying of Keats--to wit, that in a great many cases the happiest conjunction of music and the soul occurs during what the profane call silence; the very fact of music haunting our mind, while every other sort of sound may be battering our ear, showing our highest receptivity. And, as a fact, we do not know that real musicians, _real_ Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha and Abt Voglers, not written ones, require organs neither of glass nor of metal; but build their palaces of sound on a plain deal table with a paper covered with little lines and dots before them? And was not Beethoven, in what some folk consider his mightiest era, as deaf as a post?

I do not advocate deafness. Nay, privately, being quite incapable of deciphering a score, I confess that there is something dry and dreary in absolutely soundless music--music which from the silent composer passes to the silent performer, who is at the same time a silent listener, without the neighbours being even one bit the wiser? Besides, were this gift universal, it would deprive us of that delightful personality the mere performer, whose high-strung nervousness, or opulent joviality, is, after all, a pleasant item in art, a humorous dramatic interlude, in the excessive spirituality of music.

I am not, therefore, in favour of absolute silence in the art of sounds. I am only asking people to remember that sound waves and the auditive apparatus put in connection, even if the connection costs a guinea, is not enough to secure the real _hearing_ of music; or, if this formula

appear too vulgar, asking them to repeat to themselves those lines of Keats. I feel sure that so doing would save much of that dreadful bitterness and dryness of soul, a state of conscious non-receptivity corresponding in musical experience with what ascetic writers call "spiritual aridity"--which must occasionally depress even the most fortunate of listeners. For, look in thy conscience, O friendly fellow-concert-goer, and say truly, hast thou not, many times and oft, sat to no purpose upon narrow seats, blinded by gas, with no outlook save alien backs and bonnets, while divinest music flowed all around, yet somehow wetted not thy thirsty and irritated soul?

The recognition of this fact would not only diminish such painful moments (or rather, alas! _hours_), but would teach us to endure them cheerfully as the preparation for future enjoyment, the garnering for private and silent enjoyment. "Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard," etc., would act like Joseph's interpretation of the fat and lean kine of Pharaoh; we should consider concerts and musical festivals as fatiguing, even exhausting, employments, the strain of which was rendered pleasant by the anticipation of much ease and delight to come.

Connected with this question is that of amateur performance. The amateur seems nowadays to waste infinite time in vying with the professional person instead of becoming acquainted, so to speak, with the composer. It is astonishing how very little music the best amateurs are acquainted with, because they must needs perform everything they know. This, in most cases, is sheer waste, for, in the way of performers, the present needs of mankind (as Auguste Comte remarked about philosophers) can be amply met by twenty thousand professionals. And many families would, from a spirit of moderation, forego the possession of an unpaid professional in the shape of a daughter or an aunt. One of the chief uses, indeed, of the professional performers should be to suppress amateurs by furnishing a standard of performance which lovers of music would silently apply to the music which formed the daily delight of their inner ear.

For, if we care veraciously for music, we think of it, _or think it_, as it ought to be performed, not as we should ourselves perform it. Nay, more, I feel convinced that truly musical persons, such as can really understand a master's thoughts, are not distressed by the shortcomings of their own performance, the notes they play or sing merely serving to suggest those which they hear.

This transcendental doctrine (fraught, I confess, like all transcendent truths, with gravest practical dangers) was matured in my mind by friendship with one of the most singular of musicians. This person (since deceased, and by profession a clerk) suffered from nervousness so excessive that, despite a fair knowledge of music, the fact of putting his hands upon the keys produced a maddening sort of stammer, let alone a notable tendency to strike wrong notes and miss his octaves;

peculiarities of which he was so morbidly conscious that it was only an accident which revealed to me, after years of acquaintance, that he ever played the piano at all. Yet I know as a fact that this poor blundering player, who stopped convulsively if he heard steps in the passage, and actually _closed the lid of his instrument_ when the maid came in with the tea-things, was united more closely with the divine ones of music during his excruciating performance, than many a listener at a splendid concert. Mozart, for whom he had a special _cultus_, would surely have felt satisfied, if his clairvoyant spirit had been abroad, with my friend's marvellous bungling over that first finale of "Don Giovanni." The soul, the whole innermost nervous body (which felt of the shape of the music, fluid and infinitely sensitive) of the poor creature at the piano would draw itself up, parade grandly through that minuet, dance it in glory with the most glorious ghosts of glorious ladies--pshaw! not with anything so trifling! Dance it _with the notes themselves_, would sway with them, bow to them, rise to them, live with them, become in fact part and parcel of the music itself....

So, to return whence I began, it is no use imagining that we necessarily hear music by going to concerts and festivals and operas, exposing our bodily ear to showers and floods of sound, unless we happen to be in the right humour, unless we dispose, at the moment, of that rare and capricious thing--the _inner ear_.
